

# THE JESSE JAMES STORIES

A WEEKLY DEALING WITH THE DETECTION OF CRIME

*Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.*

No. 35.

Price, Five Cents.



BLACK DICK WITH JESSE JAMES ON HIS BACK, LANDED BETWEEN THE TWO PILES OF STONES CRUSHING THE TREACHEROUS DETECTIVE TO THE GROUND.—(CHAPTER CLXXXV.)



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# Jesse James' Exploits.

By W. B. LAWSON.

## CHAPTER CLXXXIII.

### SAVED IN THE NICK OF TIME.

"No hope. I've shouted till I'm hoarse, and the only answer has been the howl of the coyote and the swish of that buzzard above who is waiting, patiently waiting, for the time to come when he may feast to the full upon my flesh."

The speaker groaned, and then, with a trembling hand, wiped the cold moisture from his brow.

"Before morning I shall be dead, for I know I cannot survive the night with this terrible pain, and the drip, drip, drip of my life's blood from the gaping wound in my side which I cannot attend to. What have I done," he moaned, as he cast his bloodshot eyes upward, "that I should be made to suffer such a horrible death?"

"If I only had a knife I might cut my cursed legs off and stand some chance of beating death, but, as it is, I am forced to lie here in agony and wait for the end to come."

A peculiar sound in the near distance caused the man's face, white and drawn with pain and terror, to take on an expression of eager hopefulness.

"A horseman," he gasped, faintly, "and coming this way—he must be coming this way."

But while he listened the sound died away, and soon all was silent as before.

The man of whom we write was young, not more than twenty-five, of fine physical proportions, with a handsome and intelligent face.

A few hours before he had met with a terrible accident, and he was now lying on the ground in a deep cañon of the Colorado, pinned down by a fallen sycamore of immense size, which held his legs to earth as in a vise.

A few rods away his horse lay dead.

Traveling from the military reservation of Archeluta toward the railway station at Soledad, he had encountered a cyclone as he was about to ford the San Juan River; and, while endeavoring to seek the shelter of a rocky cave a short distance away, was stricken down by the falling sycamore.

The heavy trunk had pinioned his legs, while the sharp end of a branch had entered his side, inflicting an ugly-looking wound from which the blood was still flowing.

Jack Darlington's situation was dangerous in the extreme.

His pistol had slipped from his belt when he was hurled from his horse's back, and his knife, which he had hurriedly drawn upon the approach of the cyclone, in order to cut his way through some tall, overhanging vines, to the cave, had fallen from his hand when he fell, and now lay a few feet away, but beyond his reach.

"If I could only see Luke I believe I could die in peace," Darlington murmured, "for mother would cease worrying the moment she knew he was alive and well, and he is both alive and well, for the news I got yesterday at Piedra can be relied upon. A gambler at that place saw and talked with Luke a week ago. What the boy was doing he could not or would not say, but he



assured me that my brother was the picture of health, and seemed perfectly contented with his lot."

The acuteness of his sufferings made him cease his cogitations.

Ten minutes passed, and he lay with his eyes closed and breathing so faintly that a doctor of medicine would have declared that his death must be a matter of only a few minutes.

But Jack Darlington, late manager of the Star Comique at Creede, and formerly leading man of the Palmer Dramatic Company of New Orleans, was not destined to pass away in such a manner.

His eyes had scarcely closed when the clatter of horses' hoofs was heard, and presently three men rode down to the ford.

The spectacle of the dead horse first attracted the attention of the leader, a stern-faced man with coal-black hair and piercing eyes.

As he approached the animal he caught sight of its insensible rider a few yards farther on.

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated, in strong surprise, "but here is a poor cuss who has been caught on, or caught in, and if he isn't on the eve of croaking then my experience won't count for a nickel."

His companion hurried to his side, and a moment later the three were exerting their combined strength to lift the log from the insensible man's body.

But it was not until they had broken off a short limb of the tree and used it as a lever that they were able to raise the tree and drag the cyclone's victim out.

Applications of the ice-cold water of the river had the effect, after a while, of bringing Jack Darlington out of his stupor.

His eyes opened to behold two strange men bending over him, one in the act of stanching the flow of blood from the wound in his side, the other occupied in an examination of the injuries to his legs.

The third member of the group he could not see, for he was kneeling behind him with his face buried in his hands.

"He's all right, Frank," spoke the man who had reached the ford first and made the discovery of the dead horse and the pinioned man. "There are no bones broken, for a wonder, though the flesh is bruised and lacerated terribly."

"And the hole in his side will not bother him much, Jesse," returned the other, "now that I have stopped the claret."

"Thank you, gentlemen," said the sufferer, in a weak, trembling voice, "both for your welcome assurances and your lucky arrival and energetic and skillful services."

"Hooray!" exclaimed the man whom the rescued one could not see.

Then, coming quickly to Darlington's side, he caught the prostrate man by both hands and shook them with a heartiness that threatened to reopen the wound which the man called Frank had just closed.

"Jack, old boy," he joyously cried, "but I am deuced glad that you'll live. And I'm glad, also, to meet you. How's mother?"

"Luke, Luke, my brother, is it you?" was all Jack Darlington could say, as with eyes full of tears of happiness, he returned the pressure of the other's hand. "How glad mother will be when I write that I have found you at last."

Luke Darlington, who was a year younger than Jack, and resembled him greatly in features and build, though his face wore a more reckless expression, looked frowningly at the ground as he replied:

"I don't see the use of your telling mother everything."

"Everything? What do you mean?"

Jack Darlington's face expressed the utmost wonder.

"Why, about my doings lately. Of course, you've heard?"

"I have heard nothing."

"Then you don't know who my friends here are?"

"No."

"They are Frank and Jesse James."

"What!"

The injured man raised himself on an elbow and looked from Jesse to Frank in eager curiosity, which had in it no element of alarm.

"I am glad to meet you," he said, earnestly, "for now I can discharge a second duty."

Jesse James regarded him in puzzled wonder.

"I was in Liberty last month," Jack Darlington continued, "and was fortunate enough, while traveling along the creek road, to do your mother, Mrs. Samuels, a service."

"You did, eh?" exclaimed Frank, with deep emotion. "Then you may count on us standing by you till sheöl freezes over."

"That's what!" spoke the quiet voice of his brother. "But what happened? She has not been harmed, has she?"

"No. That is, she was not injured physically, and she was in good health and spirits when I left."

Jesse James' brow darkened at Darlington's answer.

"She has been insulted by one of those low-lived detectives who are hunting us for blood money. Am I not right?"

"Nearly so. The facts of the case are these: While riding along the road about dark, I was attracted by the loud and angry tones of a man's voice coming from a clump of bushes on the creek bank.

"I spurred my horse forward, to find a tall, spare



woman, of middle age, bound hand and foot to a tree, while before her stood two men, one of whom was brandishing a pistol before her face and talking in a rough, brutal manner."

Jesse James clenched his hands, and his eyes met those of Frank in a fierce, murderous glance.

"When I caught sight of her the man with the pistol was saying:

"'If you don't tell me where they are hidden I'll cut your ears off.'"

"What was the hound's name? Tell me, quick!" hissed Jesse James, as he laid his hand heavily on Jack Darlington's shoulder.

"Blason."

"I know him," cried Frank James, quickly; "he's the skunk who ruined Wood Hite's cousin, Lorita Quinn, and who saved himself from lynching by hiding in the hold of a river steamer."

"And I know him," rejoined Luke Darlington, "for the thieving sport who robbed me of all my money in St. Louis, and then tried to murder me by dumping me from the levee into the river when I was drunk."

"His companion," continued Jack, "was a stranger to me, and he looked like a tramp. I am inclined to think that he was one, and that Blason picked him up in the road somewhere and hired him to assist in overcoming Mrs. Samuels."

"I had my pistol out and cocked before they saw me, and when I called out to announce my presence the tramp took to his heels, and I never saw him again."

"As for Blason, who did not know me, he showed fight at once, and for a while we had it tooth and nail."

"He fired at me twice, and I returned the compliment, but it was not until I had dismounted and made for him on his own ground that the fight got to be really interesting."

Darlington paused a moment, for he was yet very weak from loss of blood, and Luke patted him affectionately on the back.

Jesse James produced his whisky flask, and Jack drank long and deeply.

"We threw away our pistols," he continued, "and fought with knives. At the end of ten minutes I was able to stand up, though cut in seven places, while the cowardly brute who had tied Mrs. Samuels to a tree lay at my feet, with his eyes closed and his face covered with blood from the slashes I had given him."

"Good!" said Frank James, with fierce emphasis. "The hound ought to have been killed."

"But he didn't die. He's alive."

"Then he will be killed," remarked Jesse James, coolly, and as if he were stating a conceded proposition. "But my mother——"

"I released her as soon as I had laid Blason out," said Jack Darlington, "and afterward accompanied her home. She had very little to say, but the words came from her heart."

"She's a thoroughbred," said Frank. "Worth her weight in gold."

"If Blason had given her half a show," rejoined Jesse James, "she would have chewed him up."

"When we parted," resumed Jack, "she said I might meet her sons if I were going to Colorado. 'If you do,' she went on, 'tell them that I am well and in comfortable circumstances, and also that I am waiting for the time to come when I may go up to Major Holderness' house and tell him he is a liar.' And that's all."

"I'd clean forgotten all about that boast I made," said Frank James. "Hadn't you, Jess?"

"No. I was only waiting for a chance to start in and make it good."

"Make what good?" queried Luke Darlington. "You are talking in riddles."

Jesse James considered a moment before replying.

"I reckon I can trust you," he said, with his cold, searching eyes on Jack Darlington's face.

"You can."

"If we can't," spoke up Frank James, emphatically, "then we'd better commence doubting each other. He ought to be true blue and warranted to wash when he has stood in with mother and is Luke's brother."

Jesse James smiled in approval of his brother's speech. Then he said:

"Frank affirmed up at Major Holderness', one day—the major is a cripple and can't move from his bed—that Murrill, the robber of the ante-railway days, would find himself a back number if he could come to life and start in to compete with the outlaws of to-day."

"Frank is no boaster, as a general thing," pursued Jesse, with an affectionate glance at his brother's sober, resolute countenance, "and he would never have made the assertion that stirred up the major if the latter had not said in his rasping, positive way, that Murrill, if alive, could give us boys points, and that we'd find mighty soon when we came to know what kind of a man he was, that it would be worth our while to whirl in and play pupils to his teacher."

"Rats!" ejaculated Jack Darlington, in strong disgust. "The major must have been off his nut from booze, or else he was an enemy of the James and Samuels family."

"He was neither," said Jesse. "It was just his contrary way. He was never known to agree with anybody, though he was and is as mild as a dove, and as honorable as they make 'em."

"Well, when he sneeringly intimated that Frank and I were a couple of fresh Reubens, who needed instruction



in the art of making the public pay our expenses, Frank got mad and said with an oath that the James boys could knock Jack Murrill's record gally-west and crooked, and that what we'd done wasn't a patch'n to what we intended to do.

"The major interrupted Frank with a low whistle expressive of derision.

"'You're talking with your mouth, boy,' he jeered. 'You've done the best or worst you can do, and I reckon you'll have to retire soon, on the laurels you have won, and let the younger generations of outlaws do the deeds that will put yours in the shade.'

"'What would you say,' said Frank, hotly—and Frank is generally as cool as a cucumber—'what would you say if we beat the world's record of reckless, lawless daring inside of the next six months?'

"'I'd say,' responded the major, coolly, 'that I'd made a mistake, and that you were some pumpkins after all.'

"'Then watch the newspapers,' said Frank, 'and if I don't surprise you, I'm a liar.'

"'And I'll consider myself a liar, if you do.'

"You now understand what mother meant," put in Frank James, "when she said to you, Mr. Darlington, that she wanted something to happen so that she could trot up to the major and give him the lie."

"The six months will be up in one week from to-morrow," remarked Jesse James, as he lighted a cigarette and critically watched the smoke as it curled up among the branches of the trees above his head, "and if we are to do anything, the time has come for us to do it."

"If we are to do anything!" repeated Frank James, in indignant surprise. "Why I'd dare anything—do anything to make Major Holderness eat his words."

"What do you say, then," suggested Jesse, quickly, "to having a raid as is a raid every day for the seven days remaining at our disposal?"

"I say yes, you bet your life, Jesse."

"Very well, then," assented his brother, with the cool composure that was characteristic of his speech and action, "the every-day racket goes. We'll astonish the major, and stir up the American public by giving them seven hold-ups in a week."

## CHAPTER CLXXXIV.

### THE TWO PILES OF STONES.

Jack Darlington had listened to the talk of the notorious James boys in silence.

When Jesse had finished, he looked at Luke and said, with a smile:

"There won't be much danger of my trying to stop any or all of these hold-ups you were speaking about, for I'll probably be laid up for a week, at least."

"I'll take care of you," said Luke, rather reluctantly, and with his eyes on Jesse James.

"Why not leave him in the cave with the old Indian. He's a medicine man, and a bang-up surgeon. I know it, for, a month ago, after that affair at Hayes City, he fixed up my arm in great shape," said Frank.

"That will do," assented Jesse.

Jack Darlington was removed to the cave, only a short distance away.

The lower chamber, which could easily have been found by any traveler in that region, seemed to be the one and only apartment.

The victim of the cyclone was looking about him dubiously, for there were neither blankets, nor skins, nor anything of which a couch might be made, lying about, when Jesse James rolled back a huge oval-shaped rock at the back, disclosing an aperture which led to a grotto of immense size.

The grotto was furnished with blankets, provisions, etc., and in it sat an old Indian preparing herbs before a small fire.

Before the James boys left, Jack Darlington intended to ask them a number of pertinent questions about Luke.

"I am no saint," he said to himself, as they carried him into the grotto, "and I am satisfied that Luke isn't, either. But I have never robbed anybody yet, and I don't like to think that Luke has. And yet, here he is, companion and friend of two of the most dangerous and daring desperadoes the American Union has ever known. I hope it will turn out that he has fallen in with them lately, and that he is not really a member of their band."

He was soon to know the position his brother occupied.

The Indian furnished the information.

He could speak English, having lived the most of his life at an agency, and his first words were addressed to Luke Darlington.

"How do you feel now, Chain-lite?" he said, with a friendly grin. "Foot all right, Chain-lite?"

"Yes. The poultice of herbs made it as good as new in a day."

"Aha, Chain-lite, there is nothing like Champa's med'cin'. Heap good, you bet."

"Chain-lite!" repeated Jack Darlington. "What does he mean? Is that a nickname of yours?"

"Have you never heard of Chain Lightning Luke?" questioned Jesse James, with a look of mild amazement.

"What!" gasped the cyclone's victim, in amazement. "Not the bold, lone-hand highwayman of Deadwood?"

"The same," said Jesse James, with an amused twinkle in his eye.

Jack Darlington groaned, and for a while nothing was said.

Luke broke the silence.



"I am not working a lone-hand racket any more," he said, quietly, "for there's better fun in being associated with the James boys. You'd better join them, too, Jack."

"No."

"Too pious, perhaps?" with a sneer.

"No."

"Conscientious scruples against unlawfully appropriating the goods and chattels of another?"

"Perhaps."

"Well, suit yourself"—carelessly—"only don't make mother think I'm any worse than I am."

"I won't."

Jesse and Frank James were conversing together in a corner, with a glance now and then toward Chain Lightning Luke, when Jack said:

"I haven't told you yet what became of Blason."

"No; where is the skunk?" eagerly exclaimed Frank James.

"He is somewhere in Colorado."

"After us?"

"Yes. You see, he got well of his wounds about the same time I found myself able to get around again—I didn't know how badly I was hurt until after I parted with Mrs. Samuels—and I learned from the sheriff that he had got an idea that you were here, and that he intended to start at once in search of you."

"I'd throw up the week's haul to get him," said Jesse James, fiercely.

"So would I," added Frank.

"You may meet him before the week is over," remarked Jack Darlington; "and if you do——"

"We'll have some fun with him," interrupted Luke Darlington, with a grim smile.

"We?" queried his brother.

"Yes. I'm going along with Frank and Jesse. You won't need me, Jack, for the Indian will take proper care of you, and in a few days you will be able to go back to Missouri."

Jack Darlington bowed his head in silence.

He knew by the resolute expression of his brother's face that it would be useless to expostulate.

An hour later the three bandits were riding swiftly out of the San Juan cañon.

Night found them at a small mining camp within a few miles of Soledad.

The landlord slunk out of sight when Jesse James turned his head toward the doorway of the hotel.

His face was covered with a heavy brown beard, and his eyes were small, shifty and set close together.

As he hurried through the hall of the hotel to the rear, his little eyes blazed with a savage light.

"I'll get you now," he muttered under his breath. "If

not to-night, then to-morrow. The reward is twenty thousand dollars, and it will be paid for the capture of Frank and Jesse James, dead or alive."

The man was Blason, the alleged detective.

He was a rascal of the deepest dye, and, after a long record of crime, for which he had escaped punishment by his cunning, he had turned detective, not for justice's sake, or an honorable desire to earn an honest living, but with the hope of earning the blood-money offered for the extermination of the James boys.

He was thoroughly disguised, but so great was his fear of recognition that he was not willing to trust himself even for a moment before the clear, cold gaze of Jesse James.

About ten o'clock Blason shadowed his quarry to a small tent back of the shaft of the Golden Crown mine.

Here Limber Jim, the one-legged sport of Southern Colorado, conducted a faro game, which, being on the square, was patronized by the miners and cowboys for miles around.

Blason peeped in and saw a sight that made his evil heart turn green with envy.

The dealer was Limber Jim's mistress, a tall, finely formed and handsome-featured blonde, and opposite to her sat Jesse James, with a double stack of blue chips two feet in height.

He was playing in luck, and all the other gamblers had stopped to watch him.

Blason saw also that Frank James and Chain Lightning Luke had their eyes on Jesse, to the exclusion of every person in the tent.

By the side of the fair dealer stood the marshal of the camp.

Blason knew him for a brave and fearless man.

The detective thought of the twenty thousand dollars reward, and made up his mind to earn it at once.

Cautiously inserting his head through the opening which served as a door, he signaled the marshal, and then pointed his finger, with many suggestive nods, at the broad back of Jesse James.

At that moment the dealer raised her eyes from the little tin box which she had been deftly manipulating, and saw him.

Without a word, she quickly drew a pistol from the money drawer in front of her and fired.

Blason gave a howl of agony and disappeared.

Frank James heard these words fall in a low whisper from the dealer's lips, "It was Blason," and then he dashed past his brother and out of the tent.

To his surprise and rage, he could see nothing of the spy who had been shot at.



## CHAPTER CLXXXV.

## THE FIRST HOLD-UP.

Next morning, early, the outlaws were up and stirring.

Jesse James' plans for the day had been formed after hearing a statement made by the landlord that a party of Eastern capitalists would visit the town in the afternoon to inspect the leading mines, with a view to purchasing.

"They'll start from Soledad," said the talkative boniface, "in a bang-up rig furnished by the superintendent of the Lucky Jonah, a new-fangled surrey, with gold lamps and fancy fixin's on the harness, an' sich, an' they'll all get loaded on champagne afore they git here."

After breakfast a cowboy approached Jesse James' horse, a noble black from the blue grass region, the gift of a Kentucky admirer, and said that, while it had good points and could probably run like a scared wolf, he had a nag—a little mustang—that could knock the spots off from him.

"Can he?" said Jesse, quietly. "Then, suppose you trot him out. If you want a race, I'll go you a rattle for five cents or five thousand cart-wheels."

"One hundred dollars that I'll make a mile in quicker time than you can," said the cowboy.

"Done."

"The race to come off along this road."

Jesse James looked at a pile of stones toward which the cowboy had pointed, and his brow clouded.

"I thought you'd back out," sneered the cowboy. "Afraid your nag would shy at the rocks, are you?"

"I am afraid of nothing," returned the outlaw, calmly. "If Black Dick can't pass that pile of rocks, I'll shoot him dead."

The cowboy smiled queerly, and then went behind the hotel, to return presently with a sorry-looking mustang of a dirty brown color, which looked as if he had not seen a comb or brush for weeks.

Beside the well-groomed, magnificently proportioned Dick, the mustang looked like a scarecrow.

The money wagered was put into the landlord's hands, and a well-known miner was selected as starter.

At the word "Go!" both horses sprang forward, but Black Dick instantly took the lead.

The pile of stones was about three hundred yards from the starting point, and toward it Jesse James' steed went tearing at a gait that promised, if kept up, to leave the mustang far in the rear before half the distance had been traversed.

Jesse James had frowned on looking toward the pile of stones when the route for the race had been mentioned, for the reason that the roadway on one side of the stones had been temporarily closed that morning, in order that the street commissioner of the place might have some needed repairs made.

Therefore, if the outlaw hoped to win the race, he must induce Black Dick to jump over the obstruction.

It was both a dangerous and difficult undertaking, but Jesse James, with lips pressed tightly together, did not hesitate for an instant.

When within a few feet of the rocky pile he dashed his spurs in the black horse, and at the same time gave him a smart blow with his whip.

"Now!" he cried, in an encouraging tone, and the noble animal, without raising his head, went straight forward toward the pile of stones.

But the very moment that Black Dick was preparing to make the greatest leap of his life, a man arose up suddenly in the open space between the two piles and excitedly waved a red bandanna.

The man was Blason, the detective.

The race was a put-up job, and the cowboy on the mustang was Blason's tool.

Another horse than the noble and intelligent animal which the famous outlaw rode would have shied and thrown his rider roughly and cruelly to the stony ground at such a sudden and startling spectacle.

But Black Dick simply reared and backed slightly; and then, while the crowd in the street looked on with pale and excited faces, and while Frank James covered his face with his hands, expecting in a moment to see his brother on the ground with the life crushed out of him, while Blason's evil eyes batted in gleeful anticipation of an early clutching of the reward, Black Dick, with a neigh, gave a mighty leap and landed fairly in the open space between the two piles of stones, crushing the detective under his hoofs to the ground as he did so.

At the moment the leap was made there came the report of a pistol, and Jesse James felt a sharp twinge in his shoulder.

The bullet had been fired by the cowboy on the mustang, and he was about to press the trigger for the second time, when crack! crack! came two reports, one after the other, and he toppled from his mustang and fell at the feet of Frank James, a corpse.

Detective Blason's tool had no sooner fallen than a cry arose from the sidewalk back of the spot where Chain Lightning Luke was standing.

"Shoot 'em down—give 'em no quarter! They're the James boys!"

Turning quickly, with his pistol cocked, Jack Darlington's brother saw that the speaker was the sheriff of the county.

Blason had doubtless confided his plot to this official, who had stationed himself at a convenient distance to watch its workings.

Alongside the sheriff stood three stern-visaged men, armed with rifles.



Luke blazed away without a moment's hesitation.

One of the men fell, and the return volley of his companions brought blood from the young outlaw's neck.

But the bullet only grazed the skin, and he never moved from his position.

Crack! crack! crack!

Frank and Jesse James had come to the rescue.

The one from his position on the back of his horse between the piles of stones, and the other on foot, with his back against the wall of a house which came flush with the opposite sidewalk, pumped lead from revolver and rifle until they found themselves masters of the situation.

All the non-combatants took to their heels when the fusillade began.

Five minutes of rapid, fearless and deadly work, and the sheriff lay insensible on the sidewalk from a wound in the head, and his three allies were slain.

Frank James and Chain Lightning Luke had left their horses a block away.

They regained them without difficulty, and then the trio rode quietly out of town.

"Was Blason dead?" asked Frank James of his brother, after an hour's silence.

"I think so. It looked to me as though Dick's foot had crushed in his head. I would have made a closer examination if the shooting had not started up again just then."

Ten miles' ride brought the outlaws to the bank of a dry creek.

Here the road turned sharply after the crossing.

At the bend there was a dense growth of shrubbery.

"Just the place to call the turn on the mining party," was Jesse James' comment. "We'll hide here in the bushes, and when the Eastern capitalists came along in their high-toned get-up, we'll turn loose on the outfit and get away with hold-up number one."

Less than half an hour after, a rumble of wheels along the hillside road above the clump of bushes at the bend was heard.

Drawing close to the roadway, the three outlaws waited for the vehicle to appear.

Before it came opposite to where they were the loud voice of the driver was heard.

"The last load of Easterners I drove over this road," he was saying, "were treated to a little surprise at the bend below us."

"What was the surprise?" was the question put by one of the passengers, a well-dressed, portly gentleman, who was smoking a fragrant Havana.

"The rig was held up by highwaymen."

"I hope we won't be treated that way," said a second member of the party, a little smooth-faced, dudishly attired man, with gold-rimmed eyeglasses.

"No danger, I reckon," replied the driver, "because——"

He never finished the sentence, for out stepped the three knights of the road.

Frank James seized the bridle of the nearest horse and brought the team to a standstill.

The muzzles of two rifles were pointed at the occupants of the carriage.

"Hands up!" said Jesse James, in sharp, menacing tones, "or we'll shoot the devil's daylight out of the whole kit of you."

## CHAPTER CLXXXVI.

### FRANK JAMES MAKES A MISTAKE.

There were three Easterners in the carriage held up by the James boys and Chain Lightning Luke.

The driver was an old-timer, and, having met with highwaymen before, adopted what he considered was the most sensible policy.

Holding up his hands, he said, with assumed jocularity:

"Just skip me, boys, if there's any shootin' to be done, for I'm an orphan, and my name's Dennis."

Only one of the Easterners—the small dudishly attired man, with the smooth face and eyeglasses, refused to obey Jesse James' command.

Instead of holding up his hands, he produced his cigar-case, and, opening it, said, coolly:

"Do you smoke, gentlemen?"

A bullet passed through the case and the fleshy part of his arm.

"You are not very polite," he said, as coolly as before, though his face was a trifle paler; "but then your Western bringing up was not probably conducive to the attainment of good manners."

Frank James, who was nearest to the bold and nonchalant Easterner, looked at him with admiring eyes.

"You're a daisy, you are," he said, though he kept his pistol for safety's sake on a line with the other's forehead, "and if you were not wedded to the easy life of a capitalist, I would invite you to join us. Jess,"—speaking to his brother in the tone of command he sometimes used when he saw fit to take the leadership, "you and Luke attend to these other mugs, and I'll see that my man here is properly dealt with."

"Pump a dose of lead into his gizzard if he gives you any more of his monkey business," replied Jesse James, with a frown.

While the latter was speaking the dudish Easterner was busily engaged in tying a handkerchief about his wounded arm to stop the flow of blood.

Having accomplished this operation with feminine daintiness, he looked up, and, presenting the cigar-case to



Frank James, said, in a singularly sweet and persuasive voice:

"You won't refuse to smoke with me, I know."

"Danged if I will," returned the outlaw, quickly, and, with a smile, he selected a fine Havana, bit off the end and put it in his mouth.

"Allow me," said the Easterner, and out came a solid gold match-case.

Frank James took the offered light with his disengaged hand, and was soon smoking with hearty enjoyment.

"Come, come!" shouted Jesse James, "go through your man, Frank, and let's move on. We've about finished our job with the others."

"How is the business panning out?" inquired Frank, carelessly.

"Pretty well; we'll scoop a thousand or so into our net."

"Let it go at that, then."

"What! Don't you intend to levy a contribution on the dude?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"He's a thoroughbred, and he's a friend of mine."

"You can be sure of that," remarked the dude, in a low voice to Frank.

"Do you mean it?"

"Yes."

"If I let you off, will you promise to do me a good turn whenever the opportunity offers?"

"I do."

"I am sorry I shot you."

"That's nothing, for"—puff, puff—"I might have shot you, if you hadn't pulled so quick."

Frank James gazed into the impassive face of the Easterner in blank surprise.

"I say I might have shot you, for I am heeled like a Kentuckian, and I've got 'em up my sleeve and in the back of my neck."

To prove his words, he calmly produced from each sleeve a silver-mounted derringer, and then from the back of his neck, *a la Mexicano*, a sharp-bladed bowie knife.

Frank James stared at him in amazement.

"You are a Jim Dandy," he said, as he lowered his pistol and held out his hand, and if you would like to know what I think of you, shake."

The man with the eyeglasses put his weapons away and laid his small, soft and shapely hand in the dreaded outlaw's broad, sunburned palm.

"My name is Kenneth Alcott," he whispered, "and I live in Denver. The next time you visit that beautiful city of the plains, incognito or as your bold self, call on me and I can assure you of a royal reception."

The tone of the speaker was so frank and engaging, and his face seemed to express such honest earnestness, that

Frank James, experienced student of human nature though he was, at once fell under the spell of the Easterner's subtle influence.

"I'll call on you before the year is out," he replied, quickly, as he gave the other's hand a warm pressure, "or you may put me down as the biggest liar west of the Mississippi."

"Are you through?" spoke Jesse James' harsh voice, "or do you want to hold an all-day seance with your bandbox beauty?"

"I am through," returned his brother, coolly, and leaving the Easterner to enjoy his cigar, he walked over to the spot where his two comrades were standing.

They had plundered the persons of the dude's companions, but the latter still had their hands up.

"Fifteen hundred dollars," replied Jesse James. "Not much for the first hold-up, but enough to keep us in peanuts for a few days, I reckon. How did you come out?"

"I'll tell you later," replied Frank James, evasively.

"All right, and we'll make your later very soon. Get aboard, you roosters," he called out to the two Easterners before him, "and you, driver, let the plugs in that rig of yours go spinning along as if the Old Nick was after 'em, or I'll send a bullet or two after you as a gentle reminder that when my bazoo toots the bell has got to ring Sabe?"

"I sabe, Jesse," was the prompt response of the Jehu.

A minute later and the carriage was across the creek bottom and dashing up the opposite hill.

"Ta ta!" said Kenneth Alcott, as he waved his hand to Frank James, "and don't forget to call!"

"What is he driving at?" asked Jesse James.

Frank told him all that had occurred.

"I'm afraid you have been played for a sardine," was Luke Darlington's comment. "I've seen that fellow's face before, and I'll bet a mine he's the richest pigeon in the flock."

"I've a good mind to ride after him and make him punge," said Jesse James, with an expression of grim resolution. "Frank gets a soft streak every now and then, and we're always losers when it comes on."

"Let him alone," urged his brother. "I'll bet my pile on that chap. He's a man of sand, and, what's more, a man of his word, or I'm dead off my kerbase."

"Let him slide then," Jesse James grumblingly responded; "but, mark my words, you'll regret your Sister Nancy tactics before the day is over."

The mine which the Eastern capitalists desired to visit was in the vicinity of the camp where the fight of the morning had occurred.

"And now for the camp," said Jesse James, when he



## THE JESSE JAMES STORIES.

had led Black Dick into the road and mounted him. "I'm going to find out if Blason is alive."

And away the three daring outlaws went.

Chain Lightning Luke was the first to reach the pile of stones where the robber-detective had hidden himself.

The obstructions on the traveled side had been cleared away, but a stalwart miner stood just beyond the pile with a Winchester at his shoulder.

"Back!" he cried. "It's certain death to go on."

"Are you a friend?" cried Chain Lightning Luke, as he reined up his horse almost at the miner's feet.

"I am an enemy of Dick Blason. Let that content you."

"And why is it certain death to go on?" asked Jesse James, who now came up with his revolver cocked and ready for instant use.

"Because General Alcott, of Denver, is here, and he has got together a posse that will riddle your whole outfit with bullets if you attempt to take Dick Blason from the jail where he is confined."

This was news to Jesse James, but his next words were: "General Alcott! Who is he?"

"Senator Tabor's partner, and the richest mine owner in Colorado."

Jesse James uttered a savage oath.

"You hear, Frank," he cried. "You have been hoodwinked."

"Bet your life you have," said the miner, "for I heard him say, when his rig came in a few minutes ago, that if he didn't down the James boys in this camp, he'd catch 'em foul before another day passed over his head."

"How many men are guarding the jail?" asked Frank James, quietly, with a hard, determined look in his eyes.

"About twenty."

"Then they are looking for us to appear, I suppose?"

"Yes. The sheriff repeated what you said to him, and at once made preparations to resist your attack. The arrival of General Alcott later caused the sheriff to double his force, and then put the command of the posse into the hands of the general."

The three outlaws had thus far been screened by the pile of stones from the view of the people on the street.

"Can we count on your aid?" asked Frank James of the miner.

"That depends."

"On what?"

"On what you want me to do. My life is worth something to me, though I do want to see you corral that villain Blason."

"Why do you hate him?" asked Jesse James, as he fixed his keen eyes on the miner's face as if he would read the secrets of his inmost soul.

"I was his partner once, and he robbed me."

"Ah!"

The ejaculation was most expressive.

"What business were you engaged in?" asked Frank James.

"A business the law wouldn't justify. Is that sufficient?"

"Yes. What's your name?"

"Pete Surrey."

"Jim Cummings' cousin?"

"Yes."

"Then we must count on you."

"I am a little stiff in one leg, and I have no horse."

"How far off is the jail?"

"Two blocks."

The miner was well known by reputation to the James boys, and they believed he could be trusted.

Under other circumstances, he might not be overly anxious to serve them, having retired, as was evident from his present occupation of miner, from the perilous vocation of road-agent, and yet there was no doubt that he entertained bitter enmity toward Dick Blason.

The expression of his face, the tones of his voice and the savage way he gripped his rifle while talking of the robber-detective all denoted a most vengeful feeling.

"Look up the street," said Jesse James, peremptorily, "and tell me what you see."

Pete Surrey moved from his position so that he could obey the outlaw chief's command.

"I see a crowd in front of the jail."

"No one between the jail and this pile of stones?"

"Not a soul."

"Then, here is the part I want you to play. Go to the jail in big excitement, and tell them there's a large body of horsemen coming up the road back of us; that they are all armed, and that they are probably Jesse James and all his followers."

"What good will such a statement do you?" asked the miner, doubtfully, as the outlaw paused.

"I am not through yet. Wait till I have finished, and then you will be able to catch on to my programme with both hands and your teeth. Tell them the James boys will get away with the attack on the jail unless they are prevented from passing this pile of stones. See?"

"I am beginning to perceive your drift."

"Advise them—you'll do your talking, of course, to the sheriff or the dude general—that if they rush their posse to the pile of stones immediately, they can use the pile as breastworks and beat back the James boys' gang."

"Well?"

"If your advice is taken, as it probably will be, if your word in this camp is worth anything——"

"I am known here as an honest miner," interrupted Pete Surrey, proudly.

"Good. Then if your advice is followed, we will be



prepared to knock the posse out instead of the posse knocking us out. Now go."

Away hobbled the miner.

Jesse James thought it prudent not to ride forward and see if Surrey went directly toward the jail, for fear of exposing himself.

As it was, Frank and Luke were behind the pile of stones, which at this point was raised a few feet higher than their horses' heads.

Where the leap of Jesse James' Black Dick had been made, which had for a temporary result the disablement of Blason, the pile was much lower.

Just then the clatter of horses' hoofs in front of the pile of stones made them give their earnest attention to the savage work about to be thrust upon them.

## CHAPTER CLXXXVII.

General Alcott and the sheriff's posse reached a point several yards from the intrenched outlaws, to be met with a reception they had little dreamed of.

Pete Surrey, the miner, had done his work well.

Informing Alcott and the sheriff that the James boys, with a large band of followers, were coming down the road with the intention of bombarding the jail and taking Dick Blason from his cell, he had induced the party to march to the stone heap for the purpose of ambushing the desperate raiders when they should come up.

The sheriff was riding ahead, conversing earnestly with the dude general, whose eyes, behind his gold-rimmed glasses, sparkled in fierce delight at the expected encounter, when—crack! crack! went the rifles of the James boys.

Down from his saddle fell the little foppish general, with a bullet in his lung, and over keeled a miner who was just behind him.

Again and again the Winchesters of the outlaws belched forth their terrible charges, and one, two, three, four more of the sheriff's party bit the dust.

But the sheriff himself had thus far escaped unharmed.

"Back, sheriff!" shouted Jesse James, after he had fired a shot which killed the officer's horse and brought the rider to the ground, "this is not your pie."

"You're singing in the wrong key," yelled the valiant officer; "I am the law's representative of this camp, and I'm going to take you in."

As he spoke he leaped on to the stone pile where it was lowest and called upon the remnant of his posse to follow him.

Encouraged by his daring move, the miners made a rush forward.

It was at this moment that Chain Lightning Luke appeared

He let fly with his rifle.

Down dropped the sheriff, seriously wounded, and up sprang the James boys, and, with wild yells, faced the oncoming miners.

Crack! crack! went rifle and pistol, and the air became filled with the groans of the wounded and dying.

The three outlaws seemed to bear charmed lives, for, though the bullets flew around them like hail and pierced their clothing, not a dangerous wound was received.

Suddenly the firing ceased.

The sheriff's posse had been utterly routed.

Of the twenty men who had followed the dude general and the sheriff to the spot only four were alive and unhurt, and these four were running down the street, weaponless, when Chain Lightning Luke, with his hat off and his eyes blazing like a demon's, sprang over the barricade.

"Come on, boys!" he shouted. "We can do the trick now without any trouble."

"Swipe a horse, Luke," replied Jesse James, as he leaped on the back of Black Dick. "There's one standing in that alley."

Chain Lightning Luke ran to the spot indicated, which was a few rods away, found a handsome gray tethered to a post, champing his bit and moving about in excitement. Luke was soon on his back, riding with his companions toward the jail.

The few miners who had remained in stores and cabins watching the fray, with no desire to take a part, only ventured out upon the street when the daring desperadoes had halted in front of the jail.

The structure was a one-story wooden affair, surrounded by a high board fence.

Jesse James pounded on the gate with his revolver and called out in a hoarse voice for the jailor to admit him or produce Dick Blason.

The answer that came back was both surprising and disagreeable.

"Dick Blason has gone. A friend came and took him out five minutes ago."

"What friend?"

"A Mexican constable. He will keep him safe and deliver him up at the county jail."

"Don't believe it!" returned Frank James, roughly. "Open that door quick, or we'll batter it down and then batter you when we get inside."

"All right," was the prompt response.

The door in the gate opened, and Jesse James dismounted and strode into the yard.

"I'll go in alone, boys," he said, quietly. "You remain here as guard. If I am not back in five minutes, you may know that something has happened to me."



He was gone but three minutes, and when he returned his face was black with rage and disappointment.

"He's gone, sure enough," he said, with an oath; "but I know what direction he's taken, and we'll overhaul him if we have to ride to Sheol."

"This may be a wild-goose chase, Jesse," said Frank, when they were off.

"If it is, we'll roast the jailer."

But that individual had not deceived them.

"Dick Blason was a passenger on the train bound for Denver, but he was heavily ironed and in the custody of the deputy sheriff.

He had been recaptured before he had got far from the jail, though the James boys did not know of his capture.

The train had crossed the Rio Navajo and was well on the way to Lone Pine, when an incident occurred that gave the newspapers of the country a pronounced sensation.

It was furnished by three men, of whom two were Frank and Jesse James.

Their fleet horses had carried them to a place of safety, and when they learned next morning at a stage station run by a man and his wife that Dick Blason would be taken on that day's train to Denver, a daring scheme, that was aimed at both plunder and revenge, was quickly concocted.

"We'll have a train hold-up to-day," said Jesse James, with a murderer's flash of his cold, blue eye, "and at the same time we will settle our score with Dick Blason."

Frank James gave a prompt assent to the scheme.

But Luke Darlington, who had maintained a moody silence while Jesse James was talking, said he reckoned they could count him out.

"Why, what's the matter?" demanded Jesse James, angrily. "Have you become chicken-hearted all of a sudden?"

Chain Lightning Luke met the notorious outlaw's gaze unflinchingly.

"No," he said, coldly, "I have not grown chicken-hearted; I have come to my senses, that's all."

"What do you mean?"

Jesse James regarded him in blank astonishment.

"I mean just this. You remember——"

"That will do," interrupted Jesse James, harshly. "I don't want to hear any preaching. If you're sick of the game and want to pull out, that's your affair. Go, curse you!"

With these words, he turned away and began to tighten Black Dick's girth, preparatory to a mount and a quick departure from the place.

Angered beyond endurance at the outlaw's insulting speech, Luke Darlington caught Jesse James by the

shoulder and roughly swung him round so that they stood face to face.

"I'm a better man than you ever dared to be," he hissed, "and I'm sorry I ever had anything to do with such a mean scrub as you have just proved yourself to be."

The words had hardly left his lips before he received a stinging blow in the face.

Chain Lightning Luke staggered back and would have drawn his pistol had not Frank James caught him by the wrist in the nick of time.

"This won't do, boys," he said, sternly. "Come, apologize, both of you, and part friends."

"No apology from me," replied his brother, whose face was as pale as death.

"And none from me," rejoined Chain Lightning Luke.

Frank James frowned.

"You're making an ass of yourself, Luke," he said, "and when you think the matter over calmly you will see that Jesse had some warrant for speaking as he did."

"I thought you'd stick up for your brother," returned Luke, sneeringly. "And now, perhaps, the two of you had better sail in and try to do me up."

"I won't need Frank's help in this matter," said Jesse James, coldly. "I can do you up alone."

"Do you want a duel?"

"Yes."

"No, no," put in Frank James, with an appealing look at his brother.

But his remonstrance was in vain.

Jesse James could not forget the words Chain Lightning Luke had used, nor was the latter in a condition to forgive his late partner the insult that had been offered to his courage.

He had determined that morning to leave the James boys, and never again engage in acts of lawlessness and bloodshed.

Finding that the duel was inevitable, Frank James, with a gloomy brow, followed the two determined men to an empty sheep corral, a few hundred yards from the house, but concealed from it by a large barn.

An understanding as to weapons, etc., was speedily arrived at.

The duel was to be fought at twenty paces with revolvers, each man to shoot at the word of command, and then advance and continue firing until one or the other, or both, should be dead or disabled.

The duelists took their positions, cocked their revolvers, and held them with the muzzles pointed downward.

At the word "Now!" given by Frank James, in a sharp voice, there came but one report.

One of the revolvers had missed fire.



Both duelists stood erect when the smoke of the weapon which had performed its duty had cleared away.

Suddenly Luke Darlington's features contracted in pain, his pistol dropped from his nerveless fingers and he sank slowly to the ground.

When Jesse James reached his side he was dead.

He was bending over the body of his victim, with bitter regret stamped upon his face, when a voice from the barn called his name.

"Hello, Jess," it said. "What in creation are you up to now?"

Jesse James looked up, and his expression changed quickly from grief to joy.

"Wood Hite!" he exclaimed. "Where did you drop from?"

"Missouri," was the cheery response of the man whose history had already become a part of that of the outlaw brothers, but who had been separated from them for some time, "and I have been hunting you for a fortnight."

"You couldn't have found us out at a more opportune time, Wood," said Frank, after hearty handshakings had been indulged in, "for we are in want of the services of a man of about your size and nerve."

When the story of the duel was told, Wood Hite gave his opinion of Chain Lightning Luke's conduct in these words:

"Served him right."

After giving orders to the frightened station-keeper regarding the disposition of the dead man's body, Jesse James deliberately shot Darlington's horse dead, and then mounted his animal, and, with Frank and Wood Hite, rode away in the direction of the railroad.

They knew the country well, and, by hard riding, they hoped to reach a certain convenient spot in time for holding up the train from Soledad.

It was about an hour before sundown when they arrived at their destination, which was the farther side of a deep cut and where there was a steep embankment on each side of the track.

After tearing up one of the rails, they took their positions behind a pile of rocks and waited for the coming of the train.

## CHAPTER CLXXXVIII.

### AN OATH FULFILLED.

The Denver and Rio Grande express, Durango branch, left Soledad at 10:30 A. M. on a certain Tuesday of a memorable year.

In the smoker rode Dick Blason and the deputy sheriff of Archuleta County.

In the middle of the afternoon the train pulled up at Amargo.

A few miles beyond was the cut where the James boys were lying in wait.

The express went tearing through the cut.

A series of quick, sharp whistles from the engine, followed by the sudden pressure of the air brakes upon the wheels, caused the cars to bump into each other and brought each passenger to a standing position.

Fear was expressed in every countenance.

The engineer, with his sharp eye, saw that a rail had been torn up at the farther end of the cut, and had instantly reversed and whistled for down brakes.

But the train was too near the open track to avert the catastrophe.

With the speed only partially lessened, the engine and tender struck the point of derailment, and, quickly careening, went down the embankment to reach the rocky bottom a mass of wreckage.

But not one of the cars of the train followed.

The link that joined the tender to the baggage car and express car had snapped the moment that the engine leaped the track, and the line of cars came to a standstill, with the baggage and express just beyond the broken track.

A portion, if not all, of the cars might have gone over the bank in spite of the detachment of the engine and tender, if the baggage and express had not been jerked sideways at the moment the link snapped, one end of the car bringing up against the rock heap which concealed the James boys, thus forming an obstruction or barricade for the cars back of it.

Before a single passenger or train hand could leap to the ground, the three outlaws showed themselves above the rocks.

Three shots rang out in quick succession as notes of terrible warning.

Then Jesse James, with his Winchester, sprang to the side of the baggage and express.

"Keep inside!" he yelled at the top of his voice, "if you don't want to eat supper in Sheol to-night."

Frank James and Wood Hite were at his side in another moment.

"I reckon you can manage this," said Jesse James, quickly. "As for me, I am going to hunt up Dick Blason."

As soon as he had gone, Frank James ordered the express messenger to open the door.

There was no answer.

Crack! crack! went the rifles of the two desperadoes.

A yell of pain announced that the messenger had been wounded.

"Open, curse you!" called out Wood Hite, "or the next shot may reach your heart."

The messenger, who had been shot in the thigh and



had fallen to the floor, dragged himself to the door, unfastened it and shoved it back.

Frank James caught the handle of door and swung himself in.

While he was occupied at the safe, which he forced the messenger to open, Wood Hite busied himself with the baggage-master, who had left his end of the car at the moment the express messenger opened the door of the other compartment and was trying to make his escape from the front.

A shot from Hite's rifle sent him tumbling, mortally wounded, to the ground.

Shots and screams from one of the Pullmans made Hite start quickly in that direction.

As he passed the other cars on his way, he saw affrighted faces at the windows, and he heard piteous voices calling upon him not to shoot.

As soon as the outlaws had shown themselves, the conductor had recognized them as the dreaded James boys and Wood Hite.

He had been held up before while doing duty on the Texas Pacific, and he knew that his life was not worth a farthing if he attempted to make any resistance to their demands.

"It's Frank and Jesse James," he said to the passengers, as quietly as he could, "and my advice is to keep perfectly still and take whatever comes without grumbling."

"Oh, we'll do that, never fear," said a young man from Chicago, with chattering teeth.

"I wish I could find a hole to crawl into," said a New York capitalist, who had been in the Silverton region to look at a mine, "for, if they go through me, I am a ruined man."

Meanwhile a scene was transpiring in the smoker which held Dick Blason and the deputy sheriff that would have made the passengers in the other cars tremble for their lives could they have witnessed it.

Advancing into the car, Jesse James was confronted by the deputy sheriff, who was on his way to the door, pistol in hand, determined to give the robbers battle, no matter what the cost to himself might be.

Jesse James had smashed the lock of his Winchester before entering and thrown it away, and, with two revolvers ready for instant use, he blazed away before the startled deputy had time to pull the trigger of his own pistol.

Down fell the officer, with a bullet in his heart.

There were but two other passengers in the smoker besides Dick Blason.

One was a sport who was on his way from Durango to Denver with a goodly sized pile in his pockets, the result of a lucky month's clean-up at the faro-table.

Determined to defend his property to the last, he let fly with his revolver when he saw the deputy sheriff fall.

It missed its mark, and an answering shot, fired by Jesse James, struck his pistol hand and made him drop the weapon with a cry of pain.

But his motto was "No surrender."

Reaching down with his left hand, he picked up the pistol, but before he could use it another bullet struck him in the shoulder.

At this moment Dick Blason, who occupied a seat in front of him, rose up and held his manacled hands above his head.

Jesse James was close upon him as he did so.

On the savage impulse of the moment, the outlaw clubbed one of his revolvers and brought it down with crushing force on the robber-detective's head.

Blason fell back in his seat with a deep groan and with the blood streaming down his forehead.

Catching him by the coat collar, Jesse James was in the act of dragging his victim into the aisle, when the sounds of a struggle in the doorway by which he had entered made him turn quickly around.

What he saw caused him to leave Blason and hasten to the door with a savage imprecation.

Wood Hite was engaged in a struggle with a powerful young man.

They were now on the floor, with Wood Hite on top.

It was at this juncture that Jesse James started from Blason's side toward the combatants.

The young man saw his rage-distorted face, and he suddenly became vested with the strength of a giant.

Rolling Hite over, he struck him a powerful blow between the eyes, temporarily stunning him, and then leaped up to give battle to the man who had killed his brother.

"Fiend! devil!" he hissed; "take that!"

Out came a bowie knife, but, as he made a fierce lunge for the heart of the outlaw, Jesse James flung one of his pistols full into the infuriated detective's face.

The young stranger staggered back against the jamb of the door, dazed and blinded by the blow.

Jesse James picked up the weapon which had been of such effective service and struck the man again and again, until he fell over, with his head upon the platform outside, and lay motionless.

With one satisfied glance at his bleeding and insensible victim, Jesse James hastened back to Blason's seat, only to find the villain gone.

The robber-detective had quickly recovered his senses, and while Jesse James had been pummeling the stranger with the butt of his revolver he had hurried to the other door and stepped out to the ground.

But he was not destined to escape the vengeance of the man who had sworn to have his life.



Not knowing which way to turn for safety, he was hurrying along toward the express and baggage car, when Frank James leaped out of the express compartment and brought to a sudden standstill.

Frank had plundered the express safe single-handed.

A brakeman had attempted to interfere with his programme by entering the compartment from the baggage end with a cocked pistol in his hand.

But he was so excited that his aim was wild, and the bullet cut a hole in the side of the car instead of finding its way to the daring outlaw's brain.

Frank James sprang upon him like a tiger before he could fire again, and had him on the floor and bound and gagged in a twinkling.

When Dick Blason saw Jesse James' brother directly in his path, he fell on his knees and begged piteously for his life.

"We'll consider your case by and by," spoke the cold voice of Jesse James behind him. "And now, Frank," he added, quietly, "we'd better light out; that is, if you have got the boodle."

"Fifteen thousand," repeated Frank, tapping a bulging coat pocket.

"That will do. Come on, Wood."

Hite, who had picked himself up from the floor of the smoker, and who had been keeping an eye on the passenger coaches meanwhile, hurried forward upon his chief's words, and the three outlaws, with their prisoner, quickly disappeared over the pile of rocks.

In a thicket a quarter of a mile away they found their horses.

Soon after they reached the place the passengers on the train heard a piercing shriek, followed by several pistol shots.

No investigation was made until an hour afterward, when the constable of Amargo and a posse found the dead body of Dick Blason under a tree.

Jesse James had fulfilled his oath of vengeance.

## CHAPTER CLXXXIX.

### JESSE JAMES IN A TIGHT PLACE—THE FIGHT AT THE CABIN.

Early on the afternoon of Wednesday, the day following the robbery of the Denver and Rio Grande express, the little postmistress of Karpay, a thriving mining town, a short distance from Paresa Springs, Colorado, was busily engaged in sorting over letters, preparatory to closing the mail for the North, when the report of a pistol on the sidewalk in front of the office caused her to leave her work and rush quickly to the door.

She saw a man lying on the walk, seemingly dead, and on the street opposite, and not twenty feet away, three masked horsemen, all armed with rifles.

"It's all right, miss," said one of the mysterious horsemen, as he took off his hat and made her a polite bow. "The fellow at your door was a little saucy, and we had to punish him."

The postmistress, though greatly terrified, yet had the voice to ask:

"It's the marshal, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"What did he do, and who are you?"

"He tried to oppose our progress, and I am the owner of this town."

Next door to the post office was the People's Bank, and the cashier, his assistant and the president of the institution were now standing in the door.

"Get back in there, quick!" shouted the man who had addressed the postmistress, "or you shall share the marshal's fate, every licking son-of-a-gun of you."

"And you had better retire to your office," said a second horseman to the little woman who had charge of the mails, "for there's a right smart chance for a circus in this vicinity."

The postmistress did not wait for a second invitation to take herself out of the way, but stepped inside, of her office quickly and closed and bolted the door.

There was a railing along the outer edge of the sidewalk in front of the bank, and, coolly dismounting, the three desperadoes, who were none other than Frank and Jesse James and Wood Hite, tied their animals to it, and then walked toward the bank door.

Frank James stood guard outside, while Jesse James and Hite entered the bank.

The cashier was now at his post, but his assistant and the president were outside the counter talking earnestly together.

"Quit that!" yelled Jesse James, who supposed that they were planning an offensive demonstration, and upon the words he let fly a bullet, which passed so close to the head of the president, who was the taller of the two, that "the wind of it," as he afterward expressed it, made his hair rise.

"Throw down your weapons!" was the next command of the outlaw, as he flourished his pistol menacingly.

The two bank officers lost no time in complying.

Jesse James kept them covered, while Wood Hite proceeded to pick up and stow away the two pistols which had been thrown on the floor.

On the cashier's desk was a loaded six-shooter, and he was fingering it nervously when there came a sharp report from Wood Hite's revolver, and the cashier's weapon spun along the desk and dropped to the floor with a thud.

"Keep your eye on the pair in front of you," said Jesse James, in quick, sharp tones, "while I attend to our friend across the way."



He was over the counter in another instant and had his pistol at the now thoroughly cowed cashier's ear.

The safe door was open, and, after one quick glance in that direction, Jesse James pulled out several salt sacks from his pocket.

"Here, you," he said, in a threatening voice, "just whirl in lively, and dump the contents of that safe into these sacks. Don't mix the boodle, but put gold and currency into one sack and silver into another! See?"

"Yes, yes," said the trembling cashier.

This operation had been performed, and Jesse James had received the sack of plunder, when there came a loud warning shout from Frank.

"Come out here, quick, boys," he called, "for hell's a-popping, sure enough!"

The next moment there came several sharp, suggestive reports, and Frank James, hatless and with his pistol arm hanging useless by his side, rushed into the room.

What had occurred outside was this:

The marshal of Karpay had a deputy, a half-breed, who had once been an outlaw himself.

He was as brave as a lion, and when the news reached him in the saloon where he was playing poker with a miner that masked robbers had shot his superior and were looting the bank, he hurried out on the street, and, hastily getting together a posse, started toward the scene of the robbery.

Frank James saw the men coming, and, realizing the danger, shouted to his brother to come out, and at the same moment fired at the head of the deputy marshal.

The shot took effect in the officer's side, and as he went down the posse behind him let go a volley which sent Frank James' hat flying from his head and smashed the bones of his forearm.

Crack! crack! crack! went the pistols outside as Jesse James reached the side of his brother.

One glance through the open door made him grit his teeth in savage rage.

The deputy marshal's posse had shot and killed the three horses of the outlaws.

"It's a hand-to-hand fight for life or death now," hissed Jesse James.

"Our time has come, I reckon," quietly responded his brother.

"Maybe, but not until I have made some of those curs outside bite the dust."

Then he added, quickly, as a number of stern faces showed themselves at the door:

"Get behind me, Frank, for you're disabled. Let Wood and me run our end of the circus."

Hite was now at his leader's side, ready to sell his life as dearly as possible.

"Let 'em have it, boys!" shouted a voice from the door.

It was that of the deputy marshal, who, though severely wounded, had crawled to the sidewalk in front of the bank, and was now directing the movements of his men.

A dozen reports that sounded as one followed this command.

When the smoke cleared away only one of the three bank robbers stood erect.

That one was Jesse James.

At his feet lay his brother, with a still, white face.

At his side was Wood Hite, writhing from a number of terrible wounds, while nearly back of him the assistant cashier lay motionless, his heart forever stilled.

The bullets of the deputy marshal's posse had struck friend as well as foe.

The president and Jesse James were unhurt.

The former gave a cry of terror when he saw the assistant cashier fall, and, darting toward the rear, opened a door which led to an alley and quickly put himself out of reach of further bullets.

Believing that his brother was dead, Jesse James followed close upon his heels.

Several shots were fired after him, but not one reached his person.

In the alley were several saddle horses.

Mounting one of them, he cut the rope halter with his knife, and, digging his spurs into the animal's sides, rode furiously out of the alley.

Reaching the main street, he saw there was a large crowd in front of the bank, and that nearly every man was armed.

"We've laid out two," shouted one of the crowd, "and now let's convert the other into a corpse and make a proper day's work of it."

The speaker was on horseback, and he galloped in the direction of Jesse James as soon as the words left his lips.

A dozen mounted men followed his example.

Away went the pursued and the pursuers.

Jesse James had not gone over a mile of ground before he discovered, to his extreme satisfaction, that the horse he had stolen was fleetier than any of the animals of his enemies.

It was late at night when he reached what he supposed was a safe retreat in the mountains.

While urging his horse up a steep trail in a thickly wooded cañon he came upon a miner's cabin.

There was nothing inside but a broken table and a pile of straw and a few tin dishes.

Having secured his horse, the hunted outlaw went into the cabin, and, throwing himself upon the straw, to the immediate confusion of a family of kangaroo rats, who had made a nesting place of the pile, he closed his eyes and tried to snatch a few hours' sleep.



In vain.

The exciting events of the day, the death of his much-loved comrade and brother, Frank, and the thought of the perils that must confront him when he should seek to make his escape from the mountains, all conspired to banish slumber from his eyelids.

As he lay upon the pile of straw, staring gloomily at the rafters, which could be plainly seen, for the moon was shining brightly, the sound of men's voices in the near distance reached his ears.

He placed but one construction upon it.

His enemies had never lost his trail and were now close at hand.

Starting to his feet, he cocked his pistol and made for the door.

"Here he is, boys!" yelled a voice not twenty feet away, and shouts and yells, now dangerously near, went up in answer.

It was now too late to retreat.

He must fight his battle in the cabin.

But before he closed the door he blazed away at the man who had gone ahead of his fellows and had discovered the outlaw's presence.

The scout—for such he might be called—fell dead in his tracks; the repeating rifle which he carried falling in front of him.

Jesse James saw the rifle and determined to possess it.

With such a weapon in his possession, he might be able to beat the officer's posse off.

Luck favored him as he started forward to grasp it.

The cabin stood in a little flat, and to reach it a steep hill had to be climbed.

The pursuers were not a hundred yards away when the scout fell, and yet it took them a full minute to urge their horses up the hill.

By the time they reached the spot where the scout had fallen, Jesse James, with the repeating rifle in his hand, was inside the cabin and had the door closed.

The leader of the party of pursuers was about to give some orders to his men, when the desperate outlaw thrust his rifle through the cabin window and began firing.

While Jesse James was fighting for his life in the cabin, a horseman rode into Karpay, and, announcing himself as a deputy sheriff from Archuleta County, asked to be directed to the office of the marshal.

"He's dead," answered the saloon-keeper, to whom the question had been put.

The horseman's face expressed the greatest surprise.

"He was mortally wounded by one of the James boys this afternoon and died at sundown."

"The James boys!" savagely ejaculated the horseman. "They are the coons I am looking after."

"What do you want them for?" queried the dispenser of liquid refreshment.

"For the train robbery yesterday, which resulted in the death of my partner."

"Who was he?"

"Another deputy sheriff."

"Oh! The officer who was taking Dick Blason to Denver?"

"Same party."

"Well, I hope the boys who are out after Jesse James will bring him in, dead or alive, for you to look at."

"There is a posse after him, is there?"

"Yes."

"Where are Frank James and Wood Hite, his partners?"

"In jail."

The saloon-keeper then appeased the deputy marshal's curiosity by a graphic narrative of the fight at the bank.

"Wood Hite is as good as dead," he added, "but Frank James isn't hurt much. He's got a broken arm and a trifling wound in the scalp, and that's all. When he was picked up from the bank floor every one thought he was dead, but he soon came to, for he had only been stunned by a bullet which grazed his skull."

"Who is guarding the jail, now that the marshal is dead and his assistant is laid up?" asked the deputy from Archuleta.

"Danged if I know. Some trusty, probably, for all the able-bodied, reliable men have gone off on the hunt for Jesse."

Thanking the saloon-keeper for his information, the horseman rode off in the direction of the jail.

He chuckled softly when he was out of hearing.

"Lucky I was riding out of Amargo yesterday on a prospecting tour—prospecting for a lone miner whom I might hold up for a stake to get me out of this cursed country—or I might not have been able to play the deputy-sheriff racket to-day, and at the same time be of service to the men who put that thieving scoundrel Dick Blason out of the way. Yes, it was a lucky chance which took Pete Surrey to the cut and brought him in sight of the wrecked train of the Denver and Rio Grande."

And, with further cogitations of a satisfactory nature, the miner who so materially assisted the plans of the James boys and Chain Lightning Luke at the mining camp in Archuleta County three days before rode leisurely up to the jail.

He had been a witness to the fight at the stone heap, but had not taken part in it, for the reason that he soon saw that the three outlaws were able to hold their own.

After the fight he would have followed the James boys out of town had he been the possessor of a horse, or if he could have found one anywhere upon the street.



Failing to secure a steed, he was forced to remain in hiding until nightfall.

Then he ventured forth, prowled around the camp until he found a saddle horse tied to a tree across the street from a dance-house.

Mounting it quickly, he rode away without asking leave of the owner.

Accident brought him to the railway cut about half an hour after the train robbery.

Being unknown to any of the passengers or train hands, he passed himself off as an honest miner, and, while going through the smoker, came upon the dead body of the deputy sheriff who had left Soledad that day with Dick Blason.

Without being observed by the train hands, who had followed him into the smoker, Surrey unfastened the dead deputy's badge and attached it to his own person.

He had no definite idea at that moment as to what use he should make of it, but a short time afterward, when he had been made acquainted with all the details of the train robbery, and had looked upon the dead body of Dick Blason, he determined to make the badge serve the purpose of assisting Jesse James and his companions, in case a favorable opportunity for so doing should arise.

Surrey had entertained for Blason a deep and deadly hatred, and the knowledge that the robber-detective had met his death at the hands of the James boys aroused within his breast an eager desire to repay them for their work.

He rode into Karpay without having heard of the bank robbery, but when the saloon-keeper had related what had occurred, and had further informed him that the little jail, owing to the absence of the assistant marshal (who had officiated as jailer) and the greater portion of the male population, was practically without defense, he quickly made up his mind to a certain course of action.

At the jail he found a trusty in charge, a misdemeanor prisoner, whose term of imprisonment would soon expire, and who had been promoted to a responsible position on account of good behavior.

Surrey showed his badge and introduced himself in his assumed character.

There was no one in the jail office while they conversed.

"Can I see Frank James?" asked the false deputy sheriff, after he had told the story of the train robbery.

"Certainly."

The trusty unlocked a closet door, took down from a hook a big bunch of keys, and then walked across the room to the iron door which opened into the tank where the cells were located.

Pete Surrey, with an expression on his face that would

have made the trusty start with alarm could he have seen it, stood directly behind him.

The key was turned in the heavy door and the bars were raised.

But the unsuspecting trusty never went any farther with his part of accommodation.

He had placed his hand on the knob, with the intention of pulling the door open, when a weight descended on his head, and he knew no more until he found himself, half an hour later, lying on the floor, bound hand and foot.

Frank James was sitting on a bunk in his cell, his mind a prey to the most gloomy forebodings, when the door was suddenly opened and Pete Surrey stepped in.

The outlaw prisoner did not recognize him, for he had met the miner but once before, but when Pete had explained his connection with the affair at the mining camp in Archuleta County, his face lighted up, and he grasped the false deputy by the hand.

A few words sufficed to make Frank James acquainted with the situation.

But they did not leave the tank until they had looked in on Wood Hite.

"No use, boys," said the latter, with a groan, "I'm too badly bunged up to be moved. You'll have to make the rifle without me."

When they found that he was not even able to raise himself from his pillow, they regretfully left him.

In the jail office the weapons taken from Frank James at the time of his capture were found, and, well armed, the two desperadoes left the jail.

It was a moonlight night, as has been previously stated, but there were no people moving about on the streets.

The stores had been closed for some time, and the only lights visible came from saloons and dance-houses.

Mounted on the animal that Pete Surrey had appropriated, they galloped out of town, following the route taken by Jesse James and his pursuers.

A few miles' riding brought them alongside a solitary horseman.

He was jogging along at a slow pace, with his arms around the horn of the saddle and his head thrown forward upon the horse's neck.

"Drunk, for a million dollars," was Pete Surrey's comment.

"Then I'll have no trouble in transacting a little business with him," returned Frank James, with a peculiar smile.

He dismounted quickly, and, running in front of the horse of the stranger, who was, probably a miner, from his dress, seized the bridle with one hand and jerked the horseman to the ground with the other.

The drunkard's head struck the ground with such force that he did not even utter a groan.



Springing into the saddle, Frank James took the lead, and the two friends, now separately mounted, pursued their journey at a much faster pace than before.

"I know a good place for roosting to-night," said Surrey. "It's a cabin that an old partner of mine used to occupy, and there are two ways to get to it, a long way and a short way. The long way is traveled the most, but we can save a couple of hours by taking the shorter route."

"Then, let's take it by all means."

An hour's ride brought them to the banks of a creek.

"Only half a mile more," said Surrey, "and we'll be at the cabin."

They had crossed the creek and were winding around a ridge, when a pistol report not far away reached their ears.

"That came from the direction of the cabin," remarked Surrey.

"And it was Jesse's old Quantrell pistol that spoke," said Frank James, quickly. "It's got a peculiar crack, and I can distinguish it anywhere."

As they hurried their horses forward over the broken and perilous trail, a regular fusillade of shots was heard.

"They've got him in a corner," said Frank James, in a fever of excitement, "but he's not dead yet."

Upward and onward they rode at the imminent risk of breaking their necks, until they came in sight of the rear of the cabin and the horse of Jesse James, which was snorting and plunging in affright about the tree to which he was tethered.

A sudden lull in the firing occurred when they dismounted at the back door of the cabin.

"Are you there, Jesse?" called out Frank James, in a hoarse whisper, as he put his mouth to the keyhole of the door.

"Yes," was the response, in a loud, clear, joyful voice; "and, if it's not your ghost, Frank, we'll clean this whole caboodle out in a jiffy."

Pete Surrey uttered a shout at these words that awoke the mountain echoes and carried consternation into the hearts of the posse huddled together a hundred yards beyond the cabin in a clump of brush.

Frank James cleared his throat and let out the old Quantrell yell.

Then the back door was flung open, and he was in the glad embrace of his brother.

"I've given 'em a terrible rally already," said Jesse, in a voice of savage triumph, "and my luck has stayed with me from the beginning—I haven't got a scratch."

He had been lucky, indeed.

When he opened fire through the window with the rifle picked up outside, the force of besiegers realized that the capture of the terrible outlaw could only be effected at a bloody expense.

But every man had followed the trail of Jesse James, knowing that he was taking his life in his hand, and was, therefore, prepared, in a measure, for whatever reception might be met with.

The fire was returned, and the bullets crashed through the wooden front of the cabin, but none found lodgement in the body of the desperate man inside.

But every time that Jesse James' rifle spoke, an enemy went down, either dead or seriously wounded.

When three of the pursuers had fallen, the posse became frenzied, and they came on with shouts and yells, but paused when within fifty feet of the cabin, where two more of their number bit the dust.

They now realized that the accuracy of the fire from the cabin was too much for them, and that it would be the height of folly to advance farther.

So they fell back, screening themselves behind logs and brush, and keeping up a steady fire in the direction of a foe they could not see, and whose exact locality they could only guess.

The balls were coming into the structure pretty fast, and at last one came so near Jesse James face that it made his blood tingle.

At this moment he paused to charge his rifle with fresh cartridges.

"We've hit him sure," whispered one of the posse when the lull came, "and now is the time when we may make a rush with some chance of laying him out for good."

"He may be playing 'possum," suggested a wiser spirit. "Let's wait a while before showing ourselves in the open again."

But another, the leader of the party, advised a strategic movement, and the advice was at once taken.

Jesse James, peering through a chink in the boards, saw the men advancing through the brush to flank him on both sides.

Crack! crack! went his repeating rifle, first on one side of the open space before the cabin and then on the other, and down went two more of his pursuers.

Only five men now remained to oppose him, and when he saw them retreat for the second time, his spirits rose, and he felt that the battle was already won.

His brother, whom he believed to be dead, came up with Pete Surrey while he was watching at his chink for the next movement of his enemies.

Frank James' advice was that the three of them should rush out of the cabin and make a charge upon the remnant of the posse.

"All right," said Jesse James, with alacrity, and, opening the door, they leaped out into the open with a series of wild yells that made the little band of five, now



crouched behind a big boulder, feel that their doom was sealed unless they took to their heels and ran like the wind.

There was no consultation between them as to what they should do.

As one man they jumped up, and, leaving their horses behind, ran, as Jesse James expressed it, "like scared wolves with a pack of hounds at their heels."

The pursuit was not carried far, nor did the outlaws put forth their best efforts to overtake and wipe out the fleeing quintet.

Returning to the cabin, they inspected the animals left behind by the posse, and, finding three that suited them better than the ones that had brought them into the mountains, they turned the others loose, and with Pete Surrey as guide, traveled all night in a northerly direction.

Morning found them on the bank of a small mountain stream about ten miles from Del Norte.

Selecting a convenient shelter at some distance from the trail, they tethered their animals and then threw themselves on the grass for a much-needed rest.

It was noon of Thursday before they awoke.

"What have we got to eat?" asked Frank James, after he had drank freely of the cold water of the stream.

"Nothing," answered Jesse James, with a frown.

"Nothing," said Pete Surrey. "But I've got an idea," he added, "and if you'll wait here for me about an hour, I think I can rustle up some grub."

"Where are you going?" asked Jesse James.

"Up to the Twin Mountain mine. It's only a few miles from here, and the superintendent and I are old cronies. I used to be his day foreman. I can go up in perfect safety," he went on, "for the reason that I am not known in these parts to be anything but an honest miner."

"All right," returned Jesse James, "go ahead and get the chuck, but don't spend too much time chinning with your friend the superintendent, for we may get impatient and come up after you."

"I won't waste a moment of my time, you may rest assured."

He was gone nearly two hours, and when he returned there was a look of eager satisfaction in his face.

Throwing down a sack full of eatables, he said to Jesse James, with assumed carelessness:

"What were you expecting to do to-day?"

"Hold up something," was the prompt reply.

"What! Not satisfied with your work of the past three days?"

"No. There are four more days to this week, and I've sworn to do some work in my peculiar line for every day of the seven."

"If that's your gait, then," returned Pete Surrey, with

a quiet smile, "I think I can put you on to a bang-up snap for to-day."

"Spiel, Peter."

The miner-outlaw dismounted, secured his horse, and then sat down on a rock and opened the sack he had brought from the mine.

"Let's eat first," he said, "and talk afterward."

The James boys were nothing loth, and, after they had fallen to like the hungry men they were, and had eaten a goodly portion of the ham sandwiches and cold baked beans which the sack contained, they lighted pipes and waited for Surrey to open his interesting budget.

"It's pay-day up at the mine," he began, "and the boys will be called up from the levels and drifts at sundown. The money came in on a wagon from Del Norte an hour before I arrived."

"What is the extent of the boodle?" asked Jesse James, eagerly.

"Not a fortune, but still a goodly sum—eleven thousand dollars."

"All in gold and silver, I suppose?"

"No, in silver certificates, principally."

"Good. That makes it easy to pack, for if it was metal, I would not know where to put it."

He tapped his already bulging pockets as he spoke.

"Why not divide the bank plunder here," suggested Frank James, "and give Pete a share. He deserves it."

"You bet he does."

When the division had been made, which had the effect of lightening Jesse James' burden very materially, the three outlaws proceeded to discuss the matter of the proposed raid on the mine.

At four o'clock they set forth in the best of spirits.

About half an hour before sundown they reached the summit of a hill, at the foot of which and in a deep cañon the Twin Mountain mine was situated.

The superintendent was in his office at the time, counting out the money which he intended soon to disburse.

Before him was a time-book, with the names of the employees.

After making many piles of the money, mostly certificates, as Surrey had reported, and placing a slip of paper with a miner's name on each, he walked to the door, and, putting a whistle, such as policemen use, to his lips, blew it sharply.

The day foreman of the mine presently appeared.

"You may call up the men, Jamison," said the superintendent. "By the time they wash and clean up it will be six o'clock."

"Very well, sir."

While the foreman and an assistant were at the cage, making ready to descend into the main shaft of the mine, where the greater number of the men were employed,



Frank and Jesse James and Pete Surrey rode down the hill toward the office.

They were all masked, in deference to the wish of Surrey, who preferred to remain unknown.

"And I don't want my friend, the superintendent, hurt," he said, earnestly, "if it can possibly be avoided."

"All right, Pete," responded Jesse James. "If I have to hit him, I will give it to him easy."

The superintendent came to the door of the office as the three masked men rode up.

He gave one glance in their direction, and, realizing the situation, retreated inside and closed and bolted the door. Jesse James smiled.

"He's true grit," he remarked, "and I hope it won't be necessary to lay him out."

The foreman and his assistant were standing by the ledge, uncertain how to act, when Frank James espied them.

Bringing his rifle to bear upon the two men, he called out, sharply:

"Come forward, quick, with your hands up, if you don't want to play the leading part at a funeral."

The men raised their hands quickly and came forward.

## CHAPTER CXC.

### A SURPRISE FOR THE JAMES BOYS.

When the foreman and his assistant had approached within a few yards of the outlaws, Frank James commanded them to halt.

They obeyed promptly, and then Pete Surrey was instructed to relieve them of their weapons and tie them up.

While this operation was being performed, under Frank James' watchful eyes, Jesse James' face was turned toward the door of the office.

There was but one window, and it was on the farther side.

"Come out of there, Mr. Superintendent!" spoke the leader of the outlaws, in a voice of stern authority, "and don't make a fool of yourself. You can't save the money, and we're bound to get it, even if we have to fill you full of lead."

No answer.

"Trying to play smart, are you. Then take this and this."

Two rifle shots rang out, the bullets passing through the thin panels of the door, but eliciting no response from within.

The work of tying the mine foreman and his assistant had now been concluded, and Frank James and Pete Surrey stepped to Jesse's side.

"What's the matter with that blanked fool of a superintendent?" growled Jesse James.

"Maybe he has fallen into a fit," suggested Frank.

"From fright?"

"Yes."

"Don't you believe it," put in Pete Surrey, quickly, "for a braver man never stepped in shoe leather."

"Why don't he make a noise, then?"

"Blamed if I know."

"Let's give him a volley all together, and then break in the door."

"That's the ticket."

Bang! went the rifles, and when the echoes had died away utter silence reigned.

"He's not in there," said Frank James, "for at such close range and with such a little seven-by-nine affair to fire into"—the office in reality was only eight by ten—"we couldn't have failed to hit him if he had been in there."

The door was burst open, and the three outlaws sprang in.

"No one here, just as I said," remarked Frank James, with a lowering brow. "But there's the safe," pointing to a corner, "and we'll get the boodle, anyhow."

The safe did not stand against a wall, but a couple of feet from it.

But Frank James met with a surprise as he took a step forward.

From behind the safe rose up the form of the superintendent.

In each hand was a pistol, and he commenced firing instantly.

Down dropped Pete Surrey, shot through the heart, before the James boys could pull a trigger.

Ping! went a bullet as Jesse James raised his revolver, and he fell back a pace and gasped for breath.

But he was not harmed, for the bullet, though true in its aim, had flattened against the outlaw's coat of mail.

Frank James fired almost at the same instant that his brother staggered back, and the brave superintendent tumbled down in his corner, with a ghastly wound in the head.

He was unconscious when the brothers reached him.

"Too bad, Frank," said Jesse, with a sorrowful shake of the head, "for I would rather have disabled him."

"He's not dead, and he'll live to be a grandfather, barring accidents," was Frank's quick reply, as he made an examination of the wound. "His skull is all right. It's only the flesh that's torn."

"Then let's bind him, and let's hurry out of this. It's 'bout time the miners were here."

When the superintendent had been tied up, a search for the money was begun.

"Curse the luck!" growled Jesse James, after he had explored the safe, "there isn't a bean here."



Frank James, who had been turning out the contents of the victim's pockets, held out a hand with a few gold pieces in it.

"And that's all he's got on his person," he rejoined, in deep disgust. "Only forty-five dollars."

The superintendent now opened his eyes.

"Where's the boodle?" demanded Jesse James, angrily. "Speak, or I'll brain you."

The wounded man shook his head.

"Brain me if you will," he said, faintly, "but you won't make me tell you where it is."

They looked in every nook, turned out drawers, tried the planks of the floor and tapped the walls.

No money anywhere.

"There were notes aggregating eleven thousand dollars in this office a while ago," said Jesse James, as he stooped over the calmly resolute superintendent, "and we want them."

"They are not yours, and you might hunt a year and not find them," said the superintendent, with firmness.

"But we might find 'em in half a minute, if we knew where they were, eh?" remarked Frank James, carelessly.

"Yes."

"Then they are hidden somewhere in this room. Jess, go to the door and keep a sharp lookout for the miners, and I'll make another search."

"I'll do better than that," responded his brother, grimly. "I'll go to the mouth of the shaft, cut the ropes of the cage, and prevent the miners from coming up."

As soon as he had gone to execute this mission, Frank James dragged the superintendent into the middle of the room.

Believing that his last moment had come, the brave mine official closed his eyes.

"I've a good mind to kill you," said Frank James, slowly; "but, as I believe that I'll find that money by your aid, I am going to let you live."

With these words, the outlaw proceeded to act in pursuance of a certain theory that had come into his mind.

He looked steadily at the safe a moment, and then glanced quickly at the superintendent.

The latter's eyes had been following his movements, and now looked coolly into his.

"Good," thought Frank James. "I'll catch him out yet."

From the safe the outlaw fixed his attention on the little table where the superintendent did his writing.

Again Frank James turned, and eye met eye.

The superintendent's gaze was as steady as before.

The next article of furniture that arrested the outlaw's gaze was an old-fashioned armchair in front of the desk.

Frank James looked at the chair long and critically.

Then he wheeled sharply and confronted the superintendent.

The latter's eyes suddenly fell.

"Aha!" said the outlaw, in a tone of satisfaction, "I've got you now, my man. You have secreted the notes somewhere about that chair."

The superintendent made no answer, but Frank James saw that his lips trembled slightly.

The cushion upon the seat was first examined, but no money was there.

The outlaw next exerted his strength to pull off the rounds, in the hope that one of them might be found to be hollow.

But all were solid.

"It's the seat itself, then," he muttered, and he tapped it, and, putting his ear down, listened eagerly.

At last he had struck the clew he was looking for.

The seat gave forth a hollow sound.

A few experiments and the top was lifted off and the contents of the hollow place were before him.

Silver certificates galore.

"Whoop la!" he shouted, in the excess of his glee. "We've made the raffle at last, Jesse."

His brother appeared in the doorway a moment after the words had left his lips.

He had severed the ropes attached to the cage and sent the latter tumbling down the shaft, to the terrible alarm of the miners below, who could not imagine what was happening above.

Some thought it the work of an enemy intent upon their destruction; others that the foreman or superintendent had gone crazy.

Jesse James looked at the heap of silver notes, and then slapped his brother proudly on the back.

"You've got a great head, Frank," he said, admiringly. "How, in the name of all that's wonderful, did you get on to this hiding-place?"

Frank told him.

"I cave," was his brother's comment. "You may take the whole business. I don't want a cent."

Frank James smiled, and then rapidly stuffed the notes into his pocket.

The superintendent uttered a groan as he saw the money disappear.

"It's a rough deal on you, old man," remarked Jesse James, in a tone of mock sympathy; "but then you must remember that the mine is panning out well, and that there's more money where this came from."

They did not leave the office until they had relieved the body of their dead comrade of the plunder they had given to him a few hours before.

"Poor Pete!" said Frank James, as he stepped out of the office. "He was a dandy while he lasted."

That night the two brothers camped near Monte Vista. Friday afternoon found them within a few miles of the



railway junction at Alamosa, without having met with any adventures worth recording.

From a conversation with a cowboy whom they met on the road, and who proved to be a friend of Pete Surrey, and a man to be trusted, they learned that common report placed them in another section of the State.

"That's good news," said Jesse James, after they had parted with the cowboy, "for now we may run into Alamosa for a little time without fear of having a mob at our heels ready to cut us up alive."

The James boys were adepts at disguising themselves, though they went about in their proper persons the greater part of the time.

They rode to a grove of trees on the outskirts of the town, staked their horses, and then made some important changes in their personal appearance.

It was about nine o'clock when they set out on their expedition to Alamosa.

At the first hotel they stopped and went boldly up to the register.

"Some of our friends may be here," Jesse had remarked, "and, if so, we want to see them, of course."

But no familiar name appeared on the register.

They left the hotel, and were standing on the sidewalk, looking about for a restaurant, when a short, stout man, whose face wore a prosperous look, passed them and went up the stairs of a lodging-house a few doors below.

"That's old Boxem, cattle king of Nebraska," whispered Jesse to Frank, "and if we can only corral him, we'll be catching the fattest pigeon in the West."

"He never carries any money with him," returned Frank James, with a frown. "He does all his business with checks."

"I know it, and my scheme is not to hold him up for what he's got on his person. It knocks that sort of a racket into a cocked hat."

"You propose to abduct him and hold him for ransom?"

"That's it."

"Can we do it?"

"We can try. The first thing to find out is when he intends to leave town. The next is, what is the nature of the business that brought him here?"

"How are we going to find out?"

"I am going up to his room and have a talk with him. He's an easy-going old coon, and when I introduce myself as a cattle man from Texas—we have got a cattle

ranch down there, - there won't be any lie in that—he'll open his heart to me at once."

"I hope he will," rejoined Frank James, but his face expressed doubt.

"He's an eccentric cuss," resumed Jesse, "and you never find him at a hotel. He selects a quiet lodging-house and eats at restaurants. I'll talk with him a while, and then I'll ask him out to have a plate of oysters with me."

"Perhaps he has just come from a restaurant."

"I don't believe it, for he always picks his teeth for an hour after eating. That's another peculiarity."

"Well, go up and try him. Don't be gone long."

"I won't; and in the meantime you can go over to that restaurant across the street and wait for me."

"All right."

Jesse James was gone half an hour.

As he entered the restaurant, talking familiarly with Boxem, Frank James said to himself, with a smile:

"Talk about great heads. Why, Jesse's beats mine all hollow."

Jesse paid no attention to his brother, beyond giving him one quick, meaning glance.

An hour passed and the cattle king and the outlaw stood at the restaurant door, the former picking his teeth and in a most amiable humor.

"I'll see you on Sunday," Frank James from within heard him say, "for to-morrow I've got to go out into the hills to look at some cattle I'm thinking of buying, and then we can come to some arrangement about your Texas herds."

Jesse James bade him good-night and then came forward to his brother.

"We can make it easily," he whispered, "for the old coon is going out of town alone."

"Horseback?"

"No, in a driving cart."

"What time does he intend to start?"

"Very early. Five o'clock."

"Good."

Boxem was a light sleeper, and next morning he was up before daybreak.

The restaurants were not open, so he breakfasted on crackers and cheese and a few horns of whisky in a saloon.

Neither Jesse nor Frank James saw him leave the town,



for they were miles away on the road he purposed traveling an hour after they parted with him the night before.

Prudence warned them not to remain in town over night.

Boxem's route led toward Alkali Springs, and he was jogging along in his cart thinking of the excellent bargain he was going to drive with the cattle owner in the hills, when two masked men sprang into the road and commanded him to stop.

Having but a few dollars in his pockets, and not anticipating an abduction, he cheerfully complied.

"All right, boys," he replied. "I'll stop, of course. But you won't make much of a haul out of me, I can tell you."

"We'll see about that," said Frank James, quietly, "when we have had a little private conversation with you."

Boxem's face became suddenly pale.

"You don't want to detain me here, I hope," he said, with a look of entreaty.

"Shut up!" replied Jesse James, roughly, "the time to talk this matter over has not yet arrived."

Boxem made a furious resistance when the outlaws were tying him up, but it was of no avail.

Jumping into the cart beside him, Jesse James took the reins in his hands and turned the cart from the main thoroughfare into a disused wagon-road that led up a narrow ravine.

Frank James followed with the saddle horses.

Several hours afterward Boxem signed a check in favor of James Waring (Jesse James' assumed name for the occasion) or order, for twenty-five thousand dollars.

Jesse James started after dark toward Alkali Springs to cash it.

"I don't believe I'll have any difficulty in getting the money," he said to Frank as he started out, "for Boxem is well known hereabouts, and I shall present myself as a cattle man."

## CHAPTER CXCI.

### AN UNSUCCESSFUL RAID.

Jesse James rode all night and shortly after daybreak he met with the first adventure of the day.

On turning a bend in a thickly-wooded district he

heard some one singing, "Tell Me With Your Eyes," in a rich, uncultivated baritone.

Jesse James stopped and listened until the song was ended.

Presently he heard a crackling noise in the bushes, and a wood-chopper stepped into the road with an ax over his shoulder.

He was a young, stalwart, pleasant-faced fellow, and as he halted suddenly at the sight of the stern-faced horseman, a deck of cards fell from his bosom to the ground.

Jesse James, with a laugh, asked him if it was a cold deck.

"If it is," he added, jocularly, "you can't play with me. I'm on the dead square and no heathen Chinees."

The wood-chopper blushed.

"It's the only deck I have," he said.

"You play sometimes, of course."

"Yes, when I can find any one to play with."

"Where is your cabin?"

"A few yards away."

"Got any boodle?"

"Money?"

"Yes."

"A few dollars."

"What do you say to a short game?"

"I'm agreeable."

"Then lead the way to your cabin."

The wood-chopper, with a satisfied smile, crossed the road and found a narrow trail which ended at a little flat.

The cabin stood at the farther end.

Jesse James dismounted, tethered his horse, and followed the wood-chopper inside.

The latter had picked up the cards dropped in the road, and after wiping the dust from them they sat down at a rough table and began to play.

Poker was the game and each man put up a stake of money in front of him before the first hand was dealt.

The wood-chopper's "few dollars" consisted of several hundred.

At the outset Jesse James saw that his opponent was no greeny.

He handled the pasteboards like a professional.

Jesse James was no mean player himself, but after an hour had passed, and he found himself five hundred dol-



lars loser, he concluded that he would have to work a grand bluff if he hoped to recoup his losses.

He was the dealer and got two deuces for a starter.

After regarding his hand thoughtfully for a while, he put twenty dollars into the pot.

The wood-chopper debated some time and then followed suit.

"I'll take two cards," said Jesse James, as he held out a king with his deuces.

"One will do for me," rejoined the wood-chopper.

They drew to their hands and the outlaw did not help his a particle.

If he won it must be on his pair of deuces.

"Forty dollars that I have the best hand," he said, calmly.

"I'll see your forty, and go you a hundred better," returned the wood-chopper.

Jesse James combed his cards over and over again with a thoughtful brow.

"He's got two pair to a dead certainty," he said to himself, "and is trying to scare me out, thinking I've got three. I'll fool him a bunch, and if I don't make him drop his two pair and flee, then I'll quit poker playing forever."

"I'll see your raise," he said, quietly, "and bet you five hundred more."

"Five hundred goes," said the wood-chopper, with alarming alacrity, "and the rest of my pile with it."

Jesse James scowled.

If he called the bet it would be a show down, and he would certainly be beaten.

Something must be done, and that something must be out of the ordinary.

"I hate to lay down such a hand as this," he said, as he looked regretfully at his cards. "Say, old man, I'll tell you what I'll do. You've got a fine rifle there," pointing to a corner where a new Winchester was standing. "Now I'll go five hundred against the weapon that I can overhold you."

The wood-chopper hesitated.

Jesse James smiled, and a hopeful light shone in his eyes.

"He hates to let that Winchester go," he thought. "I've got him, sure."

But he hadn't, for the wood-chopper presently said, with a sigh:

"It's a whack."

Jesse James put up his five hundred dollars.

"I believe I can still offer a raise, can't I?" asked the wood-chopper.

"Yes, of course," in surprise.

"Then just wait a moment."

He went to the fireplace, lifted up a brick, and brought out a bulky pocketbook.

"I'm a wood-chopper for my health," he remarked, with a smile. "As a matter of fact, I am a miner, and am not quite so poor as I look."

Selecting a number of notes from the book he laid them on the table.

"Five thousand dollars better."

Jesse James gasped.

But his presence of mind and nerve speedily returned.

"We'll see," he muttered, under his breath, "who is the better man."

Out came the sacks from his pockets—the result of his late plundering expeditions—and he called the raise and went ten thousand better.

The wood-chopper saw him and put up another raise, and so it went until Jesse James had staked his last dollar on his pair of deuces.

But his face did not betray the rage in his heart as he said, coolly:

"Shin down and let's see what you've got."

"It's your turn to show your hand first."

So it was.

Jesse James, with a sorry smile, displayed his two pitiful deuces.

"Take the pot," said the wood-chopper, calmly.

"What?"

Jesse James started from his seat, so great was his astonishment.

"Take the pot; you've won."

As he spoke, the wood-chopper threw his cards on the table.

He hadn't a single pair.

Queen high and no more.

Jesse James looked at his opponent's cards for a moment and then burst into a loud laugh.

"You're the champion bluffer of America," he said, "and dang me if I'm going to take your money."

And he wouldn't.



They parted in high good humor, after they had taken a number of drinks from a bottle of whisky which the wood-chopper had produced.

It was late in the forenoon when Jesse James arrived in sight of Alkali Springs.

"One more hold-up," he said to himself, as he looked with speculative eyes at an advancing mule team, "and the week's programme will have been carried out. One more hold-up, and then good-by for a long, long time to the United States. We'll go to Mexico and have a royal time among the dons and donnas, the senors and senoritas. This is the seventh day—by the great horn spoon"—the words were spoken aloud and in great disgust—"but this is Sunday. I hadn't thought of it before.

"A pretty how-de-do, this is," he muttered, angrily, as he reined in his horse. "Going to Alkali Springs to cash a check on the Sabbath day. I ought to be kicked by a mule for not remembering what day of the week it is. And Frank is in the same boat. Well, well"—with a philosophical sigh—"I suppose it is what ought to have been expected, considering that with us all days of the week are the same.

"What is to be done?" ran his thoughts. "I might go on to the Springs and try to dispose of the check, but there's not much likelihood that I can find a man in the town who has twenty-five thousand dollars in his pockets. No, I'll have to wait until to-morrow. In the meantime, I'll transact a little business of a different kind."

The mule team was yet some distance away, but Jesse James, who had the eye of a hawk, saw that one of the wagons—there were several—was loaded high with boxes and sacks.

"Provisions for the mines," was his instant conclusion, "and as Frank and I are in need of grub fixings, I reckon I'll hold up that train and get a sack full of something to pack to camp. A grub hold-up is the most sensible one, after all."

Riding forward rapidly, he came up to the driver, a long-haired, hatchet-faced Missourian, and pointing a pistol at his head, commanded him to get down and embrace mother earth.

The driver had a rifle lying on the seat, but he made no attempt to touch it after he had looked into the fierce countenance of the highwayman.

"I'm at your service, old son," he remarked, as he

worked his jaws rapidly over a huge quid of tobacco. "In fac', I wouldn't disappoint yer fer ther world."

He clambered to the ground with alacrity and assumed a prostrate position by the side of the front wagon.

Jesse James bound his wrists and ankles, and then mounted to the provision wagon.

The team had been halted at the foot of a small hill where the road was narrow.

On either side were tall willows and sycamores and a dense growth of underbrush.

The outlaw was busily engaged in ripping open a sack of potatoes when a peculiar whirring sound saluted his ears, and an instant later the noose of a lariat settled about his neck.

Before he could fairly realize what had happened, he was jerked over on his back and choked into insensibility.

When his assailant loosened the noose, and thus removed the cruel pressure about his windpipe, Jesse James revived.

But he found himself unable to escape from the muscular force that held him down.

A young man of gigantic stature and strength sat on his chest and held his arms firmly.

"Don't struggle, old man," he said, in a deep, bass voice, "or I may be forced to stick a knife between your ribs. It won't be a disagreeable job for me, either, for I would as soon send you to kingdom come as I would a wild beast or a poisonous snake."

The young man's face was beardless, and Jesse James regarding it critically, saw that it bore a striking resemblance to some one he had lately seen.

Lying passive and with features as composed as if he were on his feet among peaceful surroundings, though there was a savage rage in his heart, Jesse James asked quietly:

"What is your name?"

"None of your business."

"I think it is my business."

The words were uttered in such a tone that the young giant responded.



"Oh, well, I may as well tell you, I suppose. My name is Frank Boxem."

"Son of the Nebraska cattle king?"

"Yes."

"Where are your comrades?"

"A short distance away."

There was a short pause.

Then Jesse James said, commandingly:

"Let me up if you want to save your father's life."

"My father! Why, he has gone into the mountains to buy cattle."

"He went into the mountains," said Jesse James, coolly, "but he hasn't bought any cattle, and if I am not by his side before dark, he will be introduced to old Beelzebub."

"What do you mean?" queried Frank Boxem, in alarm.

"I mean that he is a prisoner in the hands of Frank, and that Frank has orders to put him to death if I do not return by dusk."

"I don't believe you."

"Perhaps you will believe the evidence of a check I have upon my person."

"Let me see it," cried the young man, who was now trembling violently.

"Feel in the breast pocket of my coat and you will find it."

"Oh, no, sonny," was the quick reply; "you can't fool me that way. If I remove one of my hands you'll be better fixed than you are now. Take it out yourself."

Jesse James scowled, but was forced to comply.

In a pocketbook the check for twenty-five thousand dollars, signed by Boxem, senior, was found.

The son looked at it thoughtfully.

"I was on my way to get it cashed," said Jesse James, "but as Frank thought the old man might have put a little joker in it, he rigged up the scheme that will result in your father's death if I don't show up at a certain time."

"What do you want me to do?" asked Frank Boxem.

"Release me and you may keep the check, and I'll turn your father loose."

"The word of an outlaw is no good."

Jesse James' dark face flushed with anger.

"Mine is," he said, curtly, "but if you don't feel like trusting me, why, your old man may go to the devil and be done with it."

Frank Boxem pondered a moment before he gave his answer.

"Come, be quick," urged Jesse James, "for some of your comrades may appear, and then all will be up with both me and your dad."

The young man removed his grasp on the outlaw and rose up.

"I'll trust you," he said, "but you must permit me to go with you."

"I have no objection, provided you have a horse."

"Of course I've got a horse. He's tied in the thicket yonder."

But before they left the wagon, Jesse James hurriedly got together some provisions from the wagon.

Frank Boxem watched him in astonishment.

"You're the queerest fellow I ever met," he said.

"The world is full of strange people. I was born queer."

As they rode away, after releasing the driver of the mule team, they heard shouts in the distance.

"Your comrades?" questioned Jesse James, as he looked back.

"Yes."

"Then let's ride for keeps."

And they did.

It was late in the afternoon when they appeared before Frank James.

He had nothing to say when his brother hurriedly told him what had happened.

"I have had my hold-up to-day," he said, with a mirthless laugh, "and it's the only one of the week that did not pan out well. Perhaps it's because it's Sunday."

Old Boxem was released, and the James boys saw him depart with his son, and then they mounted their horses and rode in an opposite direction.

TO BE CONTINUED.



Send in your exchange notices, boys. We will publish them all in a special "Exchange Department."

## ABOUT FAMOUS MEN.

Boys, turn to page 31 and see the announcement of the new Contest.

Everybody is to have another try at the valuable prizes offered. Don't miss this opportunity, but send in your article at once.

Following are some of the best articles received during the week.

Read them, and then send in your own!

### The Third Martyr President.

(By M. Alan Humble, Oxford, N. C.)

The third martyr President of the United States, William McKinley, was born in the little village of Niles, Trumbull County, Ohio, January 29, 1843. He was the seventh child of his parents, and was intended for the ministry, but fate had otherwise ordained it, and so William entered the profession of the law.

On June 11, 1861, he enlisted in Company E, Twenty-third Ohio Volunteers, as a private, was promoted in 1862, to commissary sergeant, and to lieutenant later in the same year. In 1864 he was commissioned captain, and in 1865, one month before the assassination of President Lincoln, was brevetted major for "gallant and meritorious services at the battles of Opequan, Cedar Creek and Fisher's Hill."

At the end of the war he returned to Poland, Ohio, and commenced the study of law, was admitted to the bar in 1867, and settled in Canton, Ohio, where he lived ever since. In 1871 he married Miss Ida Saxton of Poland, where he had resided so long. In 1876 he was first sent to Congress to represent his State. He was the introducer, if not author, of the protective tariff which bears his name.

One of the most striking illustrations of his courtesy and honor is the scene in the Republican Presidential Convention held in 1888, when he refused to be nominated, for in his words, "I—as it is known to the gentlemen—am pledged to Sherman—and I do not request, I demand, that no delegate who would not cast reflection upon me shall cast a ballot for me."

He was told afterward that he had done a more noble deed than had ever been known in politics.

"Is it then so honorable," was his comment, "to refrain from a dishonorable deed?"

In the presidential election of 1896 he was elected over the Democratic candidate, Bryan, by an overwhelming majority, and was renominated and again elected in 1900. And, as is familiar to all, was shot, on the 6th of last September, by the hand of an assassin. He lingered several days, and there was hopes of his recovery, but on the 13th he sank rapidly, and he passed away September 4, at 2:50 in the morning.

He was a noble, honorable, and devoutly religious man; a member of the Methodist church and was a man

of much ability and strong convictions. He was worshipped by his mother and idolized by his wife. Throughout his life he was a member of the Republican party.

Born poor, he was a typical American, successful through virtue.

### Life of Paul Jones.

(By William E. Crail, Severy, Kansas.)

I choose for my subject Paul Jones, and I hope it will reach you in time. I think no person rendered us more service during the American Revolutionary War. He was born in Arbingland, Scotland, July 6, 1747. The scene of John Paul's early boyhood was on the banks of Solway Firth; so he was accustomed to the sight and sound of the waves from infancy.

In 1760, at the age of thirteen, he went as a sailor on a voyage to Virginia, and was so pleased with the New World that he resolved to some day make it his home. He had made many voyages before he was twenty years of age. In 1773 his eldest brother died in Virginia, and John went there to settle up the estate. He resided here three years, and here is where he received his last name, Jones.

When Captain Paul Jones arrived in Virginia the rumblings of war with the mother country were heard in the distance. He at once offered his services to the Continental Congress, and was made first lieutenant of the Alfred, a small war vessel of the first American navy. After proving his skill and bravery, he was promoted to the rank of captain. Soon after this he wrote in a letter to a friend:

"I had the honor to hoist, with my own hands, the flag of freedom the first time it was displayed on the Delaware," etc.

In June, 1777, Captain Jones was appointed commander of the frigate Ranger. He had many adventures in this vessel with the glorious Stars and Stripes floating above him.

In February, 1779, Captain Jones was appointed commander of a French ship which he named the Bon Homme Richard, after Benjamin Franklin's famous almanac.

This vessel's last and greatest battle took place off the coast of Yorkshire with the new English warship, the Serapis. At the beginning of the battle an eighteen-pound shot of the Serapis entered the rotten hull of the



Richard. After this the English commander hailed Jones: "Have you struck?" The reply was, "I haven't begun to fight."

After three and one-half hours of battle the *Serapis* surrendered. In this vessel he set sail for Lexel, Holland.

I think this last battle his greatest achievement. It shows the bravery, courage, skill and shrewdness of one of the truest patriots that ever drew breath. He died unmarried in Paris July 18, 1792.

### Admiral Farragut.

(By Leon N. Frame, Milwaukee, Wis.)

David Glasgow Farragut, our first admiral, was born of lowly parents, near Knoxville, Tenn., on July 5, 1801.

While David was only a small boy his father moved to New Orleans.

The boy took such an interest in the navy that Commodore David Porter adopted him. When only nine years old he became a midshipman, and at eleven made his first cruise on the *Essex*. He was with her when she was captured by the *Phoebe* and the *Cherub* at Valparaiso in 1814.

For over forty years his life was unmarked by any great event. Although by birth and marriage connected with the South, he was always true to the Union. And, in 1861, when the war broke out he was made commander of the Western Gulf Blockading Squadron, with the rank of flag officer.

His special duty was to open the Mississippi and capture New Orleans. This he soon accomplished, and for it received the thanks of Congress, and was made rear-admiral.

After opening the Mississippi he returned to the gulf, and after the capture of Vicksburg by Grant, went to attack Mobile. In this battle he lashed himself to the rigging of his vessel. He finally captured the forts after a desperate fight in which he lost one of his own ships.

This was the last of his active service, for owing to ill health he asked to be recalled. The grade of vice-admiral was created for him, and in 1866 Congress made him admiral.

He had command of the European squadron in 1867-8. On returning home the veteran admiral retired to private life, and died at Portsmouth navy yard August 14, 1870.

Farragut was one of the bravest best men our country has ever known. He was never afraid to do right under any circumstances, and was always true to his country.

### General Andrew Jackson.

(By Claude H. Zimmerman, Fort Worth, Texas.)

General Andrew Jackson, familiarly known as Old Hickory, made his mark in history at a great crisis of the war. He was entrusted with command at a threatened point, which was at the city of New Orleans.

He arrived there on the second day of December, 1814. After his arrival he began making preparations for the defense of the town. In the battle that occurred there shortly after there were eight Americans killed and about 2,000 British killed. An interesting feature of General Jackson's arrival in New Orleans was his personal appearance. He was tall and gaunt, of very sallow complexion, his head was protected with a small, close-fitting cap. He was very shabbily dressed. He wore an old blue coat, while his legs were covered with long dragon boots, reaching to his knees.

A very striking feature of his face was his piercing black eyes and determined expression.

I think the greatest deed done by General Andrew Jackson was when he saved the city of New Orleans.

### Thomas Jefferson, Who Wrote the Declaration of Independence.

(By William Shannon.)

Thomas Jefferson was born in 1743, at Shadwell, Virginia, and died in 1826. He was a member of the Continental Congress and drafted the Declaration of Independence and drew up the Act of Religious Freedom adopted by Virginia, through Madison's influence, in 1785. He proposed our present decimal system of coinage, and secured its acceptance. In 1785 he was sent to France to succeed Franklin as Minister of the United States. On his tombstone is the following epitaph, written by himself:

"Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statutes of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and the Father of the University of Virginia."

The Presidential election of November, 1800, was a time of great excitement and bitter strife between the Federalists and the Republicans or Democrats. Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, and Aaron Burr, of New Jersey, were the Republican candidates. Each received seventy-three electoral votes, while John Adams, the Federalists' candidates, got but sixty-five.

On such a case the House of Representatives, a majority of whom were Federalists, had to decide the election. They finally voted in favor of Jefferson, and he was declared President, with Burr for Vice-President (for according to the law then the candidate for President



who received the greatest number of votes next to those of the successful candidate, became Vice-President.)

This period marks the downfall of the Federalists. For the next forty years the Democrats held control.

It was about this time that a marked change took place in men's dress, and breeches and long stockings began to give way to trousers—a product of the French Revolution. The British Minister, Mr. Merry, says Jefferson wore "pantaloons and slippers" when he received him.

### How Daniel Boone Fooled the Indians.

(By Robert Green, Bowling Green, Ky.)

Colonel Daniel Boone was enabled by the compensation which the State of Virginia gave him for his military services, to purchase several tracts of land, which he cultivated with his usual industry, varying his agricultural pursuits with hunting expeditions.

On one of these tracts he erected a rude log house near which he planted a small patch of tobacco to supply his neighbors, for he never used the weed himself. He had built a tobacco house for curing it, of rails ten feet in height and roofed with cane and grass. The stalks were split and strung on sticks about four feet long, the ends of these being laid on poles, which were placed in tiers across the building. The lower tier being dry, Boone was busy removing it to the upper part of the building, supporting himself on the lower poles when looking down he saw that four Indians, armed with guns, had entered the low door. One of them said to him:

"Now, Boone, we got you. You no get away more. We carry off to Chillicothe. This time you no cheat us any more."

Looking down from his perch, Boone recognized the intruders as some of the Shawnees who had captured him in 1778, and answered, pleasantly:

"Ah, old friends, glad to see you. Wait a little till I have finished putting up this tobacco, will you. You can stand there and watch me."

The loaded guns which had been pointed at his breast, were lowered, and the Indians stood watching his every movement. At last so interested did they become in answering his questions about old acquaintances and in his promises to give them his tobacco that they became less attentive and did not see that he had gathered the dry tobacco into such a position that a touch would send it in their faces. At that instant he touched the tobacco and jumped upon them with as much of the dried tobacco as he could gather in his arms, filling their eyes and nostrils with it. Dust-blinded and strangling, they could not follow him as he rushed toward the cabin where he could defend himself. Looking around when he was about fifteen or twenty yards from the house, he saw them groping in all directions and he heard them cursing him as a rogue and themselves as fools.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

I think the JESSE JAMES WEEKLY is all right.  
Washington.

MORRIS ROSEN.

You are quite right. The finest stories ever written about the James boys are contained in this weekly.

I am a constant reader of your JESSE JAMES WEEKLY, and think they are just excellent.  
Columbus, Ohio.

WILLIAM SHANNON.

We appreciate your words of praise. No expense is being spared to give our readers the best and most authentic tales to be obtained of Jesse James and his bandit followers.

## TALES OF HUNTING AND TRAPPING.

### WHAT CAME OF A BEAR HUNT.

Reader, allow me to introduce to your notice Bob Weldon and myself. The former was as fine a fellow as ever drew bead on a painted redskin; five feet eleven in his stockings, light blue eyes and flaxen hair, and, taken all in all, was a perfect type of manliness and beauty. He could hit a pipe-stem as far as he could see

it, and once his rifle was raised, a yelping redskin was sure to go under. As for myself—well, never mind me. Of course, I was Bob's opposite in everything except fearlessness, and that accounts for the great liking we felt for one another. We were inseparable. Where Bob went, I went, and *vice versa*. Many beaver have we



trapped, and many an Indian has been wiped out as we stood side by side, and defied their yelling hordes to approach us.

One day Bob and I went out in search of bear meat, with which to stock our larder. For several days previous we had not seen a single Indian, and so long as they left us alone, we were not likely to hunt them up. We left the big Red River and struck a southwesterly course toward the Comanche country, where we knew bears were pretty plenty; but luck was against us. We had been gone two days before we caught sight of a single grizzly, but on the third day we espied quite a large one enjoying himself on a rocky ledge among the mountains. Bob was eager to salute, but before he could raise his rifle Bruin was "gone from our gaze."

"Thunderation!" (Bob's favorite word), "ef thet ar b'ar didn't know I wur gwine to shoot, sculp me!"

I nodded my head, and was about to resume our journey when Bob seized me.

"By ginger!" he exclaimed, pointing a little to the westward of us, "look yonder, Dave! Ef thet ain't In-jin I dunno what is!"

Following the direction pointed at, I could see a thin wreath of smoke rising from the forest, which was about two miles distant. Bob was all excitement—a rare thing for him—and was for instantly setting forward and letting the redskins hear from us; but at this moment a horseman emerged from the forest and approached us at full speed. He was followed by a pack of the yelling thieves, who occasionally sent a shot after him. As they neared us Bob gradually cooled down, and by the time the horseman made us out he was perfectly calm.

We had loosened our knives and revolvers, and seen to the priming of our guns, and were prepared to give the heathens sharp work.

The Indians had discovered us about the same time with the white, and as the latter hastened his speed they lessened theirs, until they came to a dead halt.

The stranger rode up, and dismounted.

He was an elderly man—probably fifty—yet he bore his years lightly. As he dismounted, Bob said:

"Tight brush, stranger. How many on yer has ther imps wiped out?"

"Ten, all told—eight men and two women," answered the stranger.

"Wal, ef they want any more, I guess Dave and I'll sell our sculps ef they are willin' ter pay ther price. Purty high, though. Eh, Dave?"

"Yes," I replied; "they must win them to wear them."

The stranger gazed first at Bob and then at me, and finally said:

"You surely don't expect to be able to keep them at bay?"

"I dunno," answered Bob. "Ef you mean do we spec to git away, I sez yes! But ef you mean without gittin' hit, I sez again, mighty risky!"

While this short dialogue was in progress, I had kept my eyes on the Indians, who were spreading out in the form of a semi-circle, carefully keeping out of rifle range. Our position wasn't a very enviable one; to the front was a band of yelling Comanches, and in our rear was a high bluff, which it was impossible to climb. I watched the savages and found that our continued silence had given them a sense of security which was rendering them careless, and on pointing it out to Bob he exclaimed:

"Dave, look at that painted imp. I kin reach him, or I'm a painted sinner."

No sooner said than done; up went his rifle and down went the redskin. The imps set up a yell and rushed toward the fallen brave, but I sent a shot toward them which brought them to their senses, and they again retreated out of rifle range, leaving another of their braves upon the ground. The stranger had no rifle, and Bob noticing it, said:

"Stranger, I s'pose yer wants to do sumthin', so yer kin set to work pullin' up ther grass fur about fifteen feet round yer. I'm goin' to give them imps pertickler fits, I am."

I gazed at Bob in astonishment, as did the stranger, but the latter instantly set to work.

Bob's idea gradually dawned upon me—he was going to set the grass on fire! A strong wind was driving from us toward the savages, and they would have to run for their lives.

Several times the Indians approached rather close, and always fell back one or two less, and now they were apparently in consultation as to the best course for them to pursue.

Bob emptied his powder horn on the grass at the edge of the small clearing, and, giving the stranger his pistol, said:

"When I guv ther word jest let her rip."

The Indians had arranged upon their plans, and with a loud yell set forward. They meant to carry our position by assault. Bob yelled, "Fire!" and a blinding flash, succeeded by a heavy cloud of smoke, hid the enemy from our view. The next moment a strong flame shot upward—the dry grass had caught.

In vain the savages strove to escape. The fire gained upon them rapidly. The forest caught, and the few who had reached its recesses fell victims to the devouring flames.

We started for our home the following day, and reached it without further adventure.



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